MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

#279. August 2006.
$4/US. $5/Canada

MIKA MIKO

also: the fall. cardiac arrest. digger & the pussycats. punk in central asia. more.

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL
TOP 10

For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

TIM BROOKS

TRANZMITORS-Some Girls-EP
YOUNG WASTENERS-Waiting-EP
RUIN-Distort/Confuse-EP
THE DICKS-Ten Inches-10"
CROW-Bloody Tear-LP
PHOENIX FOUNDATION-Falling-LP
BLANK-ITS-Happy Accidents-LP
TOYS THAT KILL-Shanked!-LP
NASTIES-Teenagers Bored-EP
NIX-Speed Freaks-EP / MARKED MEN-live

MITCH CARDWELL

V/A-Tete De BéBé-LP
COUNTRY TEASERS-Empire Strikes Back-LP
JAY REATARD-Hammer I Miss You-EP
TIME FLYS-Reality is a Rock Band-EP
BLACK TIME – Midnight World LP
CHEVEU-Clara Vénus / Superhéro-45
CIAOCULOS-Hey Little Girl-7"
NIX-Speed Freaks-EP
TYVEK-Mary Ellen Claims/Honda-45
HORIZONTAL ACTION/CHICAGO BLACKOUT- live

ROB COONS

CROW-Bloody Tear-LP
VICTIMS-Divide and Conquer-CD
THE DICKS-Ten Inches-10"
RUIN-Distort/Confuse-EP
CAREER SUICIDE-s/t LP
PHOBIA-all
TRANZMITORS-Some Girls-EP
THE HOLY MOUNTAIN-Enemies-12" EP
BRAINHANDLE-Scratching At My Skull-EP
SCRATCH-live

PAUL CURRAN

WAVING THE WHITE FLAG

JONATHAN FLOYD

THE ERGS-A Guide To New Jersey-CD
HIPSHAKES-Ok Alright-EP
NIX-Speed Freaks-EP
JAY REATARD-Hammer I Miss You-EP
TOYS THAT KILL-Shanked!-LP
BANNER PILOT-Pass The Poison-CD
CROW-Bloody Tear-LP
BLACK LIPS-Party At Rob's House-EP
MARKED MEN-live
BBQ/DEMON'S CLAW-live

CHRIS HUBBARD

YOUNG WASTENERS-Waiting-EP
DICKS-7" & 10"
SOLDIER DOLLS-'81 to '85 LP
CAREER SUICIDE-Fall Out-12"
DIR YASSIN-Discography LP
RABIES-Disease Core EP
TRANZMITORS-Some Girls-EP
SOLDIER DOLLS-'81 to '85
CROW-Bloody Tear LP
DISKONTO/MASSGRAV-split LP

KENNY KAOS

THE TRASHIES-Let it Be Trashed-EP
NIX-Speed Freaks-EP
TRANZMITORS-Some Girls-EP
JAY REATARD-Hammer I Miss You-EP
TRISTESS-Bara Rock 'n' Roll-EP
NASTIES-Teenagers Bored-EP
GHETTO WAYS-Dirty Down-EP
BLACK LIPS-Party At Rob's House-EP
THEE CRUCIALS-Instant Party-45
TIME FLYS-Reality is a Rock Band-EP

CAROLYN KEDDY

NIX-EP / JAY REATARD-EP
HIPSHAKES-EP / BLANK-ITS-LP
TRANZMITORS-EP / THROBBIN URGES-LP
SONIÇ CHICKEN 4-Don't Let Me Down/Sonic Night-45
TURNOMATICS-Diablo Bueno-EP
V/A-Tete De BéBé-LP
PERSUADERS-Forced To Fuck...-CD
THE DICKS-Ten Inches-10" & 7"
THE OBLIVIANS / CHEATER SLICKS - live
HORIZONTAL ACTION BLACKOUT 2006-R.I.P.

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Let us know which issue to start with!

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE: #148, 153-154, 156 pts. 1 & 2, 160-163, 166, 172, 174-175, 179-181, 184-210, 214-220, 222-227, 229-278 **See page 4 for pricing and other info.**

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COVER: Mika Miko. Photo by VC. Design by Golnar.

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl or CD-only releases to the address on the previous page. See Demos section for where to send tapes & CD-Rs.

PACO MUS

- LA URRS/COPROLITOS-split EP
- TRANZMITORS-Some Girls EP
- DICKS-7"
- TRISTESS-Bara Rock'N'Roll EP
- BLACK LIPS-Party At Rob's House-EP
- TYVEK-Mary Ellen Claims/Honda-45
- DIRTY NEEDLES-Justine Is A Junkie EP
- NIX-Speed Freaks EP
- BRAINHANDLE-Scratching At My Skull-EP
- CROW-Bloody Tear LP

RAY LUJAN

- BANNER PILOT-CD / THE ERGS-CD
- THE ONE AND ONLY TYPICALS-CD
- MANIFESTO JUKEBOX-Strain-LP
- GHETTO WAYS-EP / TRANZMITORS-EP
- HIPSHAKES-Ok Alright-EP
- THE METHODONES-21st Century Power Pop Riot-CD
- WAR OF WORDS-REVENGE-EP
- JOHN KASTNER-Have You Seen Lucky?-CD
- PHOENIX FOUNDATION-Falling-LP
- FIFTH HOUR HERO-live

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

- TRANZMITORS-Some Girls-EP
- HARPOON GUNS-12"
- NIX-EP / PHOENIX FOUNDATION-LP
- JAY REATARD-EP / YOUNG WASTENERS-EP
- DICKS-Live 7" & 10"
- TOYS THAT KILL-Shanked!-LP
- BRAINHANDLE-Scratching At My Skull-EP
- TYVEK-Mary Ellen Claims/Honda-45
- THE FALL / SURRENDER / RED HERRING / FLAK / CAMP X-RAY / LOSER LIFE - live

GOLNAR NIKPOUR

- DICKS–7" & 10"
- CRUELTY/DISCLOSE-split EP
- YOUNG WASTENERS-Waiting-EP
- BLACK LIPS-Party At Rob's House-EP
- TYVEK-Mary Ellen Claims/Honda-45
- RABIES-EP / NIX-Speed Freaks-EP
- CROW-Bloody Tear-LP
- BRAINHANDLE-Scratching At My Skull-EP
- CLOCKCLEANER-EP
- YOUNG OFFENDERS-demo

DONNA POOLE

- BLACK LIPS-Party At Rob's House-EP
- DICKS-Pigs Run Wild/Hate the Police-45
- MIND CONTROLS-Prelude to a Fight-EP
- THE TRASHIES-Let it Be Trashed-EP
- NASTIES-Teenagers Bored-EP
- TRISTESS-Bara Rock 'n' Roll-EP
- TIME FLYS-Reality is a Rock Band-EP
- NIX-Speed Freaks-EP
- TRANZMITORS-Some Girls-EP
- THE DICKS-Ten Inches-10"

BRUCE ROEHRS

- VICTIMS-Divide and Conquer-CD & live
- REDUCERS SF-Raise Your Hackles-CD & live
- HANK III/ANTiSEEN-split EP
- V/A-Backstreets of American Oi! Vol. 2 - CD
- RUIN-Distort/Confuse-EP
- ATTENTAT SONORE-Barricades 1905-EP
- NIX-Speed Freaks-EP
- BROKEN BOTTLES-45 & live
- HAMMERLOCK-True Grit-CD & live
- V/A -Anti Disco League Vol 1-CD

RYAN WELLS

- DIRTY NEEDLES-Justine's A Junkie-EP
- MIND CONTROLS-Prelude to a Fight-EP
- TIME FLYS-Reality is a Rock Band-EP
- V/A-Tete De BéBé-LP
- BANANAS-Forbidden Fruit-LP
- CIAOCULOS-Walk On-EP
- NIX-Speed Freaks-EP
- CHEVEU-Clara Vénus/Superhéro-45
- TRISTESS-Bara Rock 'n' Roll-EP
- THE INTELLIGENCE-I'm Your Taxi-EP

ZINE TOP TEN

- Big Easy, Small Window #1
- Clench #1
- Doris #23
- Jane
- My Brain Hurts #3
- Negative Reaction #5
- Olly Olly Oxenfree!
- The Secret Files of Captain Sissy
- Trust #117
- Razor Cake #32

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A WHOLE CRAPLOAD OF MRR BACK ISSUES...

#150/Nov '95. NY Loose, Snap-Her, Sick Boys, Splatterheads, Pipe, Pregnant Man, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Smellie Fingers.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#154/Mar '96. Motards, Subincision, Stisism, Donnas, Stallions, Count Backwards.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#160/Sept '96. Automatics, Boycot, Toast, Morning Shakes, Mormons, John Q. Public, Sex Offenders, Ballgagger, Business, Apocalypse Babys, Good Riddance.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#162/Nov '96. Phantom Surfers, Candy Snatchers, the Stain, National Guard, Torches To Rome, Restos Fosiles, Two Bo's Maniacs, Snuka, Redemtion 87, Torture Kitty.

#163/Dec '96. Last Sons of Krypton, Prostitutes, Wig Hat, Boys, Let It Rock, Enemy Soil, Vulcaneers, Half Empty, Zeros, Deadcats, Teen Idles.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Ümlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#185/Oct '98. Traitors, Wimpy Dicks, Armed & Hammered, Dylan McKays, NME, Tezacrifco, Worm, Roswells, Raxola, Beatnik Termites.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, 3rd Party, No Class.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres..

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, Pressure Point, Bump 'N Uglies, The Victims, A//Political, Outlast

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Aaron Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR catalogue #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#203/April '00. Spazz, Slang, *Slug & Lettuce* zine, *Suburban Voice* zine, As We Once Were, Red Angel Dragnet, Four Letter Words, Slampt Records, the Wednesdays, the Fuses.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#216/May '01. Propagandhi, Angelic Upstarts, Discordance Axis, Ruination, Photographer: Chris Boarts, Strap-Ons, Lynnards Innards

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#221/Oct '01. The G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene report, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11," Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#226/Mar '02. Queer punk special issue. Vaseline, Quails, Skinjobs, Italian queer punk report, Vaginal Davis, Feelings on a Grid, Sissies, Scott Free, Dumba, Columns.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine , Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah.

#252/May '04. Fucked Up, Firestarter, Inepsy, Laukaus, Great Clearing Off, Radio Reelers, Extreme Noise Records, 46 Short, The State, John The Baker, Free Verse, Chrystaei Branchaw photos.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. The Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, The Boss Martians, Reactionary Three, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, The Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, "Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech scene report, New Zealand scene report.

#268/September '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oil!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, *Baboon of Sickness* zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

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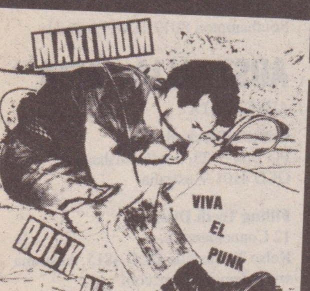
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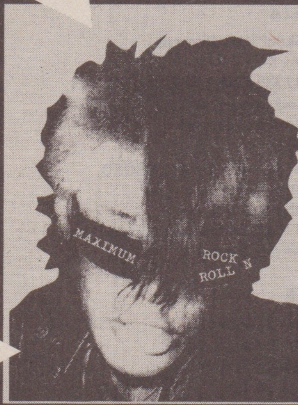
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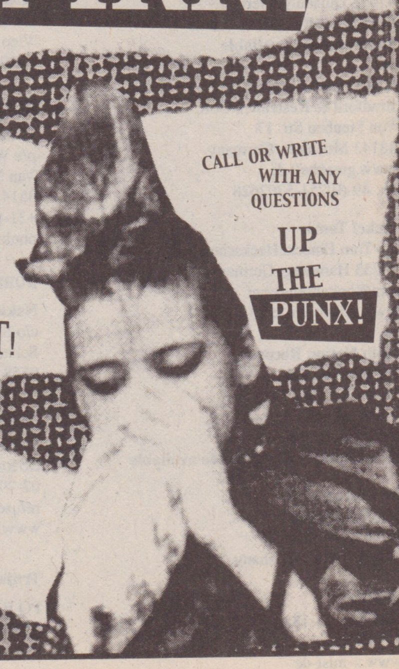

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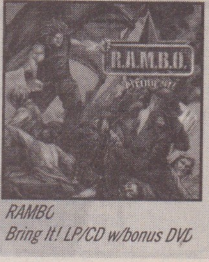
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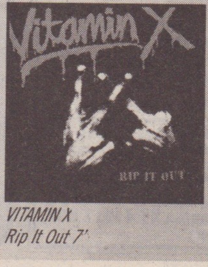
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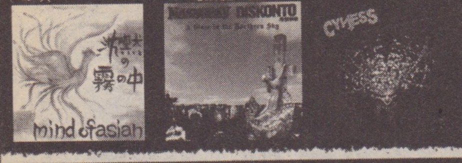

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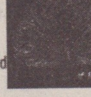

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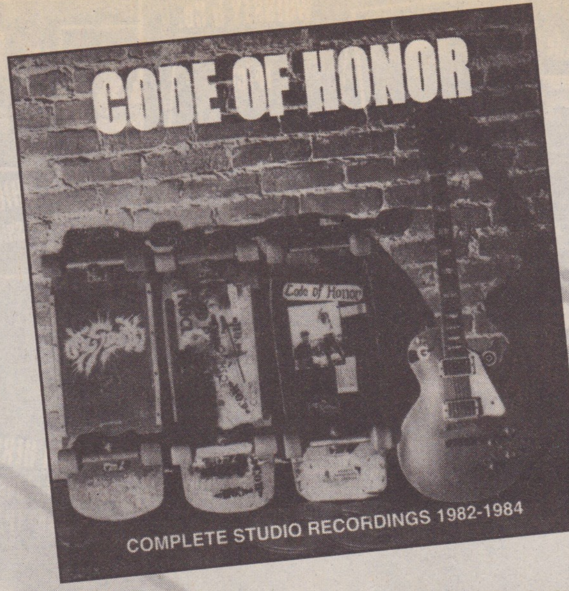

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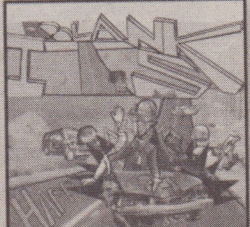

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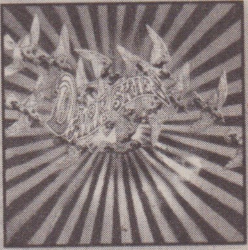
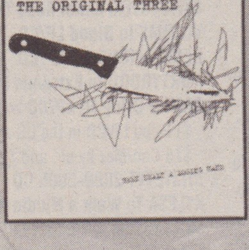


Dark Skies - s/t
...stomp and twist their throttling, heavy soul stylings through channels of Groundhogs and the MC5 - but burgeon in the hydroponic northwest heat of Dead Moon and the Wipers.



Original Three - Dealt a Losin Hand
Lead by Ian of the Black lips the Original Three play down tempo garage punk. Recorded by Alicja Trout (Lost Sounds/MouseRocket) with a guest appearance by Jay Reatard (Reatards/Lost Sounds)

Tokyo Electron

Tokyo Electron - s/t
This record is chock full of that blown out trash punk sound that Ryan (Reatards, Digital Leather) has perfected over the years. TE has quickly turned into one of his best and most sought out bands to date

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LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

Dear MRR/Paul—

I'm writing regarding the "food-for-bands" subject in the letters section of the April issue of *Maxi Rocker*. I think you're wrong, meaning that I believe a meal should be a given for a touring band, always expected and always delivered. Please don't get me wrong, as I may be making assumptions that are totally out of line, but I think we should all work on that; this romantic starving-punks-on-the-road thing should be a relic of the past. I'm speaking partially from my own experience, cause I went on a two-week European tour with my band (Unison) and we were fed like kings. It's a sad fact, and almost every touring American band says the same thing—that bands often get no food, no place to sleep, and sometimes hardly any money while on tour. Fuck that starving artist crap! A band that is on the road, spending an already tight budget on gas, needs and depends on food/drinks. If you expect the band to buy their own food all the time, then why attempt to tour? All the money will be spent on junk food, so why bother? Why go on tour if you already know you're in for a lousy experience, instead of the time of your life? I for sure know that the times we spent in the van with our friends Senata Fox from Croatia were some of the best times in our lives.

So my point is, when you do a show, do it right. Be sure to deliver all the things you promised, try to always have the amount of money you said you'll pay the band, cook them a meal; it will be enormously appreciated. And no, I don't think everyone should eat at the show. I don't get it here—if cooking a meal is a strain, financially or otherwise, why cook for everybody? The kids that go to the show come from their respective homes/squats/warehouses; they can eat there. The band is on the road, and you as the organizer of the show have to make everything right; make the band feel at home, give them food, make sure there is at least a floor to crash on. A completely different thing is if there's some kind of food donation at the door—then by all means have food for everyone involved; a huge feast is always better than a little one. But if that's not possible, I say always go out of your way and cook a meal for the band. They will need all the extra kick for the tiring the drive next day. Your show-with-no-meal vs. no-show-at-all comparison is stretching it a bit—shows/tours should be fun, not hard labor.

Much respect,

—Srdjan

Unison c/o Srdjan Kuzmanovic / Jove Ilica 32 / 11000 Belgrade / Serbia
go_011@hotmail.com

P.S. Anyone who may be interested in hearing some Eastern European hardcore/punk can write me. I'll use the opportunity to plug my band's next release: Unison's new 10" *The Sum* out late June/early July on Rimbaud Records from Cork, Ireland. CD version out now on Belgrade's own HaKo Bastards Records.

Dear MRR—

I've been a cop for 11 years. I've been an MRR radio listener since 1982. Still listen every week.

Not all cops hate punks. (One of my favorite bands is MDC...go figure.) The cop that stops you just might be one. Ponder that; we are people...not machines.

Best wishes,

—Dave

MRR—

All of the discussions that I have seen on the immigration and border control issue have been polarizing and seem to fall into the typical "our side is right" bumper sticker mentality that we have in our two party democracy. Do any of us realize what is going on and what the repercussions of our actions could be?

Many immigrants that are seeking citizenship or legal status in the United States are working for low wages, but have no deductions or taxes. If they get their wish and become documented workers, they will begin to have taxes and other fees deducted from their earnings, which could cut their pay by a third. Do they realize this? The net income that they would be left with might be insufficient and lead them to seek government assistance. Employers could not afford to offset these new payroll deductions through wage increases without cutting jobs to accommodate inflated salaries.

Liberals generally seem to be the group most willing to grant citizenship to illegal immigrants. If they get their wish, they will be introducing a new group of conservatives to the United States. Do they realize this? A large majority of the illegal immigrants come from Central and Latin America. The majority of these individuals come from devout Catholic backgrounds. Regardless who helped them gain citizenship; a committed Catholic would be reluctant to vote for the party of abortion and gay rights. Gratitude is short lived when religious heritage enters the situation.

Conservatives are the group most often identified with big business and free trade policies such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA). These policies have continued to suppress Latino economies and led to an increased number of illegal immigrations to the US. *Do they realize this?* The income difference between the United States and Mexico is astronomical when compared to other bordering countries around the globe. US companies lay off domestic workers and open operations in Mexico to take advantage of the low wages. It is in our companies' best interest to keep the wages in Mexico as low as possible. Illegal immigration will be an issue as long as the wage difference is so wide, no matter how long and tall the walls are that erect at our borders.

On June 12, 1987 in West Berlin, Germany, Ronald Reagan wowed masses of Americans with his speech that delivered the infamous "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!" line. In that same speech he also said that the wall, guards and checkpoints were "an instrument to impose upon ordinary men and women the will of a totalitarian state." Do we realize this?

—Troy D. Varney

4843 North Wolcott, #2B
Chicago, IL 60640
773.704.9765
troydvarney@yahoo.com

Dear MRR—

Thanx for consistently putting out issue after issue, consistently. I have a lot of trouble focusing on larger projects in my life and I also pretty much find great difficulty focusing on the smallest and easiest of things, so I honestly don't know how the fuck you do it. It makes me feel even crappier when it takes me months of writing/deleting/hating my thoughts and getting them out into my shitty zine, *Direct Impact*. But yeah, it's such a breath of fresh air to me to read about punk rock in something that I can hold in my hands. The online blogs of today are not my thing, what can I say? I'm only 23, and feel passionate about cassette tapes, paper zines, and the like. When I was 16 or so, I remember downloading Operation Ivy and A Global Threat songs off of Napster, before the lawsuits, and it led me to buy the bands' material, so I'm not saying I'm against the internet. I just feel that it is a pale imitation of what I hold true in my heart—reading opinions on paper in front of me and passing it on to my friends, telling them "Check out this article!" To me, the personality, the spunk, the excitement—it's all lost online, and I'll continue to subscribe, buy, trade, and distro DIY paper-in-your-hand zines to the end (of the world, of paper zines, which one will be first? I don't know). All the columnists, letter writers, scene reporters, everyone—keep up the awesome work... Some awesome records that have come out somewhat recently I would like to share: Weekend Nachos *Torture* 7", I Object! *Teaching Revenge* LP, xBrainiax *Disgrace to the Corpse of Eric Wood* (31 song!) 7", and the Merkit 7" —all great records; write to me if you don't know where to get them already—and the

LETTERS

Hombrinus Dudes, a band from my beloved local scene of Grand Rapids, MI, are coming out with their full length album soon, so keep an eye out for that... Write for any/everything:

—Sock
306 1/2 North Fifth Street
Grand Haven, MI 49417

What's up my gangsters—

I first wanna thank *MRR* for keeping me busy reading for ten years now (since I was twelve). I always love the letters section, basically because there are so many whiny, naïve, judgmental punkers sounding in their letters like crotchety old women. But hey, I used to be like that; people grow up. Who really gives a flying fuck who "sold out" by using so-and-so distribution that may or may not have a vague corporate tie (i.e. kids who like to whine about Taang! bands) or who is a "fascist" because they jokingly said something slightly offensive pertaining to (or sometimes not) someone's religion, race, sex, sexual preference, nationality, etc.?

I saw some letter a few issues ago from a kid (I hope) basically calling such classic bands as the Damned, Bad Brains, Cramps, Buzzcocks, Ramones, Clash, Dickies (I think they mentioned them) and of course Sex Pistols (an overrated band anyways) sell-outs because they weren't 100% "DIY." Remember that back then, there wasn't an underground sea of labels, distributors, etc. to work with. They got media attention because they were new, strange, completely original, and wild. While I'm not happy about hearing some of these bands' songs on fucking cellphone, soda, and car commercials these days, it doesn't change the fact that their music was, is, and always will be classic and original. These days we have thousands of lame street punk bands claiming they're keeping it real by doing nothing more than ripping off great bands like One Way System (or whatever) more than 20 years too late. Create your own sound, motherfuckers—most of this shit sounds exactly the same, I can't even tell what the fuck you're singing, and you end up sounding exactly like the ten bands before you on the shitty compilation I just heard you on, so I'm not gonna buy your music.

Also, for as long as I've been reading *MRR*, I've been reading the angry rants of kids who assume the position of "politically correct" scene police. I'm a left-wing, 200% anti-discrimination, religion-hating, ex-anti-war protester who also happens to fully support gun-rights for citizens (I don't trust the government one bit). But I'm also a drunk who loves to piss people off and has a tasteless sense of humor. All these "PC" nazis sound like a bunch of damn hippies! Shit, you can't even sing songs about drinking, fighting, and fucking (that's what I like to do!) anymore without getting called a chauvinist pig or a redneck. If you wanna be involved in a scene where everyone is nice and friendly and never says anything even slightly mean about anyone else, go fucking hang out with the burnouts at Phish tribute band festivals or some shit, because they don't like "bad vibes" either. You should be hog-tied, ball-gagged, and forced to listen to GG Allin and Fear. As far as I can remember, a big part of punk rock was about pissing off the upright citizens around you, scaring them and making them uncomfortable.

Nonetheless, I am still glad to see kids read *MRR* and get into real hardworking rock 'n' roll bands, whatever they choose to believe. Like Jack Grisham from TSOL said, being into punk rock used to be a big a commitment. Your parents hated you, the school hated you, the cops hated you, the other kids hated you, etc. That's how it was for me even up until maybe the last five years (punk had long lost its initial culture shock by then). Now kids can sit on the couch with mommy and daddy and watch all the "punk" and "screamo" homo bands with their pretty faces, makeup, tattoos, dyed hair, and spiked belts, singing love songs to their stupid girlfriends. If they're really "hardcore punk rockers," they can go to Sam Goody and find the latest shitty album by the Casualties, Anti-Flag, or whoever the fuck, have mommy fork out $140 for a pair of Doc Martens and $30 for an el cheapo studded belt at the mall. Punk's not dead, but it's by no means a threat or a scare to the majority of people out there, so it's not quite as fun as it used to be. Now you can walk into a party with a mohawk or whatever, and girls compliment you on your cool hair, hippies assume you must be a "liberal" and try to discuss the latest news on the latest injustices in the Middle East (let the Muslims and the Jews kill each other off already, fuck wasting American lives) or more droning on about Bush (someone shoot that fuck already!), and the jocks don't fuck with you anymore. I liked having people hate me as a kid—it quickly exposed the few people I respected. Well y'all, all I gotta say is keep on supporting real hardworking bands that don't sugarcoat their music or rip off other groups.

—Blackout Colin

Colin—

I considered your letter one of the typical "MRR letters section rant" diatribes you mention until I got to the sentence, "let the Muslims and the Jews kill each other off already, fuck wasting American lives." Now that is some atypically fucked up bullshit. Maybe some less time listening to G.G. and some more time getting your head out of your ass will help you be less of a racist prick. Thanks for your letter,

—Golnar

Dear MRR—

You'll have to excuse me, I've just gotten May's punk/business theme issue and I want to add my bit. I run a small distro and fanzine (Negative Reaction) and I think the bottom lines are credibility and reputation. Big business may be evil but you can sure learn from their mistakes. In the UK 2 of our local Kwik-Saves (supermarket) recently went out of business. For years it has been stuffing glossy leaflets through our doors telling us of fantastic offers that—once you got to the store—didn't exist. I'm sure the MD thought it was a great con to get people into the store. Only problem for them—people never again believed a word they said, and didn't go back.

Another example—the UK porn mag industry (er so I'm told!) has for the last couple of years, took the piss out of it's punters with price increases, less pages, and reprints reprints reprints, ads ads ads. As a result nobody buys them anymore, and the only people still having the piss took out of them are the advertisers who still think it sells 100,000 when most of those end up in a recycling bin. And at £1.50 per minute sex lines, it couldn't happen to nicer people. So what's all that gotta do with *punk rock*? Well basically, you can operate on a cut-and-run basis like a dodgy trader on a market selling faulty electrical goods, make as much money as possible then disappear; or you can treat your punters with respect. You will only survive if it's the latter. I have traded with certain labels/distros offering decent deals—people I've dealt with for ages—and they still don't mention when a CD is in fact only a CDEP or cheap and nasty card sleeve/ poly sleeved monstrosity. The only thing this does is create confusion and suspicion, so that, unless I know of the actual release in question, I don't take the risk. Then there are the distros that will say *anything* to shift their stuff. The amount of times I've seen a record that I've given 4/10 or 5/10 to in my reviews, marketed as "a classic" is unbelievable. It's almost like reading Bruce Roehrs' column! Most of these distros disappear after a year or so.

Then there's organization. I have dealt with about five US labels in the last couple of months and only one (Sound Idea) got their stuff to me without having to send chase-up emails. None of these labels are dodgy—just a bit chaotic. Nevertheless, a bit frustrating when a month down the line, my punters are still asking for stuff that (unbeknown to me) hasn't even been posted to me! Certain UK anarcho distros have had a particularly bad reputation taking months to fill an order. I blame that on too much weed. Another thing that pisses the punters off is distros who send out outdated lists full of stuff that isn't there. I have been guilty of this myself after mistakenly working off two identical-but-different LP lists at the same time, and I was still getting orders two months down the line for stuff that was crossed off the wrong list. It would be hard for big business to understand it, but I want my "competitors" to survive—the more there are, the more there are to trade with, and the better deal I can get from the people who I buy the CDs off in the first place, so all labels/distros should:

a) sell at a fair price b) get the stuff to the punter fast
c) don't charge silly amounts for postage (I've seen inland postage listed at £2 for 1 x 7" before—equivalent to nearly $4!) d) trade with other labels, or charge fair wholesale rates as it's non-too-clever panic-selling a year down the line when you still have most of them left. e) trade CDs out of cases to save postage and be sensible on the customs form!
f) keep your lists up to date g) describe stuff honestly h) answer your punters' emails, and don't rip 'em off—news travels fast on the punk grapevine!

If anyone wants to be on my mailing list (CD/ vinyl/ clothing/ badges) just email trevhagl@hotmail.com.

Any labels wishing to trade I mainly deal in Oi!, '77 style punk, street punk, melodic (but not pop) punk, possibly the odd bit of D-beat, and I have a decent selection of Oi/punk including Step 1 stuff, Drongos For Europe, some good bootlegs (note that only bands big enough get bootlegged so I have no problem with this) and metal badges (mainly Oi!) (or should that be "pins" in the USA?).

Cheers,

—Trev Hagl

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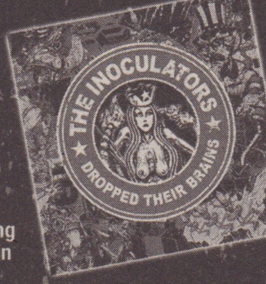
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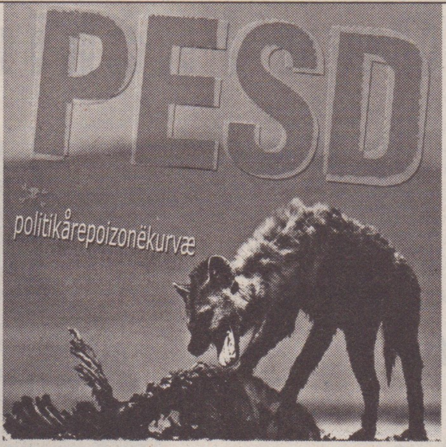
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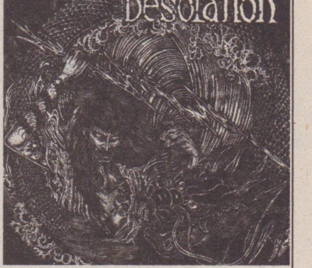
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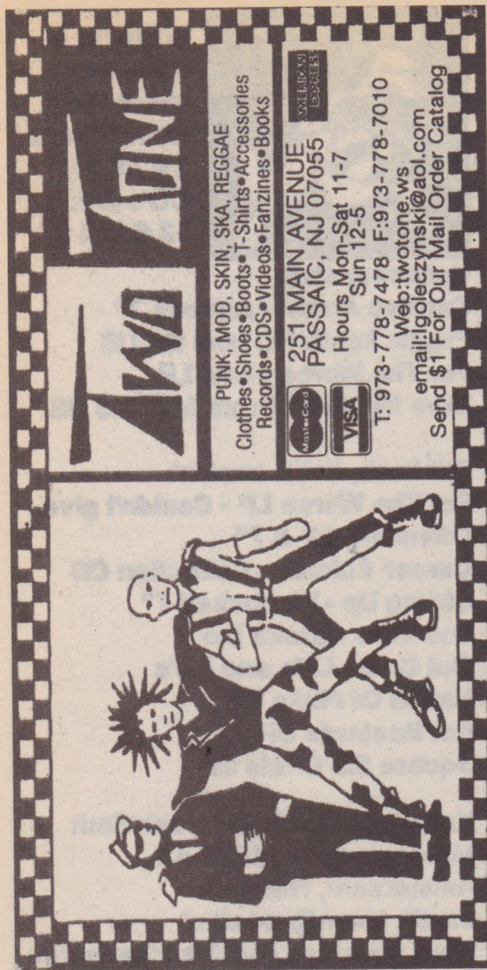
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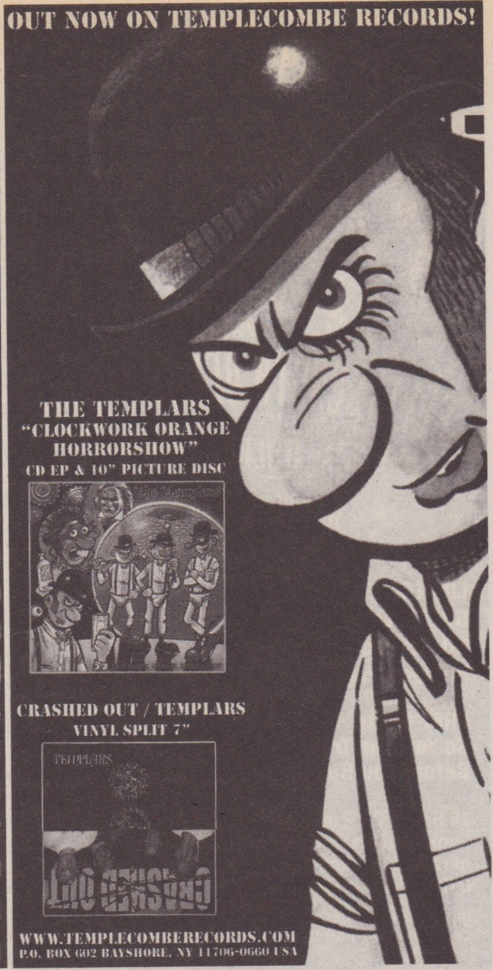
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COLUMNS

BE PREPARED FOR ACCIDENTS…

WITH ARWEN CURRY

Longest Reef, Tallest Trees, Oldest Mountain. Greta Garbo, Robert Penn Warren, Henry Fonda. Beans, corn, assorted squashes. Distinguished American Diplomats. For a while they had scenes of jungles and swamps, and I liked those. For some reason, the postal clerk always asked, "You know there are only ten on a sheet, don't you?" These seemed to be a subtle disdain for the unabashed artistry of the Northeast Deciduous Forest. Then there's Disney, Ronald Reagan and Old Glory.

Who decides? On the USPS website, it says that the "Postal Service is proud of its role in portraying the American experience through postage stamps" and goes on to say that "almost all" of the subjects of stamps are suggested by the public, which submits proposals to the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee, established in 1957. The committee selects about 30 ideas for new commemorative stamps, along with new ideas for the regularly available stamps, to send to the Postmaster General for approval. The Committee is supposed to select subjects that can "stand the test of time, be consistent with public sentiment, and have broad national appeal."

And then a new twist. In June 2006, at the International Philatelic Exhibition in Washington, DC, Hewlett-Packard announced that it would soon send its first-class mail with the HP logo in place of US postage ("Personal Postage Gets a Corporate Stamp," *SF Chronicle*, June 1, 2006). It's an American twist, for sure, but is it consistent with public sentiment?

Wait, you say. Isn't postage the province of the federal government, of the people, apart from the corporate touch? Indeed—or at least, it was. In May, the USPS gave the go-ahead to a year-long trial that allows corporations to use "private postage" on envelopes. To accomplish this, lobbyists convinced Congress to amend an 1872 law that forbids advertisers from putting their mark on postage and other American currency.

Stamp collectors are wary of the new development, understandably. The rest of us should be too. Imagine deciding, next time you send your zine to *MRR* for review, between McDonald's and Chevron stamps. Yes, you're using the government by using the post in the first place, but at least you're not being mocked, or made an accomplice to big business. The advertisement-free space is shrinking and shrinking: we should protect what little territory is left.

Arwen. PO Box 170291, SF, CA 94117

LET'S GET HURT

MITCH CARDWELL

Lately, it feels like I've had about all the punk I could possibly handle. The absence of my regular rundown of the punk vinyl last month came about from me directly contributing to the glut, releasing a record on my label for the first time in close to two years, which kept me very busy for quite a few weeks. As soon as the dust settled, I blasted off on my yearly jaunt to *Horizontal Action*'s Chicago Blackout for five straight days of ridiculous rock'n'roll, alcohol, and food. Between the trip and the new record, I was running on empty and needed a break. Now fully recovered, I hope you'll find the releases detailed below worth the wait and worthy of your time and dough.

I had sorta been toying with the idea of doing another theme column along the lines of my Japanese punk deep-dig from way back when. At first I thought an in-depth exploration of the American punk hotbeds of Memphis, New Orleans, and Atlanta was a worthy subject, but with the recent barrage of fantastic French punk rock, my attention soon shifted. In recent columns, I spilled a fair amount of ink on THE FATALS and FRUSTRATION, but those aren't the only heavy hitters France has to offer right now. In lieu of an entire column's worth of French goodness, S-S Records saved me the headache and released *Tete De Bebe*, a compilation LP showcasing some of the most adventurous punk currently blanketing France.

If you are at all familiar with S-S Records (and their previous compilation, *Babyhead*), you won't be surprised by the out-there nature of many of the tracks featured on *Tete De Bebe*. The general vibe throughout seems to lean toward electro-punk (think METAL URBAIN might've been an influence???) and off-kilter sounds in general, but any fan of S-S's releases thus far will have their jaw dropped by many of the tracks included here. Familiar names like CRASH NORMAL, VOLT, and LILI Z. make appearances, but it's the newer bands like CRACK UND ULTRA ECZEMA, LE CLUB DES CHATS, and ELECTRIC GUITARS that really stand out. As an overview for some of the most exciting European punk rock currently being produced, *Tete De Bebe* delivers in spades.

A couple of the *Tete De Bebe* bands have other new releases that are worth investigating. Fresh off *Tete* and a recent S-S 7" EP of their own, CHEVEU returns with a new single, "Clara Venus" b/w "Superhero" released jointly by SDZ Records and Royal Records. CHEVEU's brand of rough, utterly unclassifiable punk weirdness not only solidifies their position in my year-end best-of, but makes them a band I simply can not wait to hear more out of. Easily the most exciting new band I've heard in 2006!

Yakisakana Records recently released a split 10" EP with the NORMALS and the CHEERAKS entitled *Rock'N'Roll Protocol Is A Big Baboon!* Both bands feature some folks from CRASH NORMAL and both present two distinctly different takes on punk. The NORMALS appear to operate on the same set of principles that any dime-a-dozen Euro fuzz-punk band might operate on, but the energy and vibe all reek of something much weirder boiling beneath the surface. It makes for an interesting variation in a totally over-saturated genre, which is always welcome. The CHEERAKS, well, let's just say they wear their weirdness on their sleeves. Their JOHNNY CASH "Ring O' Fire" send-up is a twangy piss-take, completely with unenthusiastic yee-haws and heavily accented boredom. Naturally, it's surrounded by the expected ear-splitting they've shown us previously. This 10" flew under the radar and has been available for quite a while (rightly so, as this simply isn't for everyone), but it features the finest outings by both bands thus far.

Although I would never call the punk that THE FATALS' camp is responsible for "tame," I will say that compared to the *Tete* sect, these bands are far more accessible to the causal punk listener…providing you can find some enjoyment in primitive and fuzzy garage punk. Profet Records has released a handful of hard-to-come-by singles as of late, the most notable being the *Live At WFMU* 7"EP by THE FATALS. The second single from LES BELLAS—"Electrified" b/w "Out For A Nonsense Day"—is two tunes that borrow equally from '60s French pop and tried-and-true American garage. It's far sweeter than what you'd expect from this lot, but I must say it's a refreshing listen. Profet returns to familiar bombastic territory with the *Ghetto Child* 7" EP by TUNNEL OF LOVE, one of America's most promising and blown-out new bands. I've gotta peg *Ghetto Child* as the pick of the Profet litter. Score one for us Yanks!

Nasty Product has graduated to 12" releases this month with the debut LP from KING CUSTER MCCARTHY AND THE MAGNETIX, *Just Me…My Pleasure And I*. This LP is far superior to anything found on the recent Magnetix singles and limited to a scant 500 copies. Nasty Product also has three new singles out! The most notable would have to be a new single by the LIMES, an all star outfit featuring JACK OBLIVIAN, HARLAN T. BOBO and Nick from AMERICAN DEATH RAY. Their *Rock'n'Roll Heart* 7" EP picks up right where their seldom-heard Solid Sex Lovie Doll EP left off…and you might actually have a chance at scoring this one! SONIC CHICKEN 4 return with a new 45, "Don't Let Me Down" b/w "Sonic Night." SC4 seems to be the straightest of the bunch, offering up some great '60s-inspired garage with a stomp healthy enough to cross over into punk. Lastly is the first 7" offering from ex-BEGUILED honcho HAUNTED GEORGE, "The Devil's Canyon" b/w "Graves In The Desert," showcasing his creepy new one-man-band outfit.

Hook Or Crook Records wisely caught wind of HAUNTED GEORGE and quickly issued his debut LP, *Panther Howl*. The LP is chock full of desert-burnt rumblings with an eerie, CRAMPS-inspired air about them. Let's just say that he ain't called Haunted George for nothing. Clearly, this man is bothered by some ghost/demon/boogieman and he's somehow managed to pass the terror on to the listener. Bone-chilling selling points aside, I will say that the tunes and vibe of *Panther Howl* are all very well done and the LP is unlike anything else I've heard this year. Also among the recent Hook Or Crook crop is a great new 12" EP by DEMON'S CLAWS (*Live In Spring Branch, TX*) and a welcome vinyl return from ex-REVELATORS front man JOHN SCHOOLY AND HIS ONE MAN BAND (*Live On Australian Radio* 7"EP).

My fan-boy obsession has yet to wane and I must once again offer up all the news I can muster regarding JAY REATARD. First and foremost, Jay's first "solo" release, Goner Records' *Hammer I Miss You* 7" EP, is out now. Having meticulously dissected every new project he's embarked on, I must say that this new EP is his finest post-LOST SOUNDS outing thus far (with the possible exception of a FINAL SOLUTIONS single or two). Not to be outdone, the new-look REATARDS have a new 7" EP, *I Lie Too*, out now on Canada's Zaxxon Records. When not busy playing on records, Jay's been releasing records on his Shattered imprint on a very regular basis, flooding the market with Reatard-related product. This month, Shattered spewed out four noteworthy releases: the "Black Boots" 45 by JACK OBLIVIAN, the "Bombs" 45 by VIVA L'AMERICAN DEATH RAY MUSIC and two full length CDs by THE PERSUADERS, *Forced To Fuck: The Anthology* and *Live And Shattered*. It's a pretty good thing when your favorite artists happens to be one the busiest motherfuckers around.

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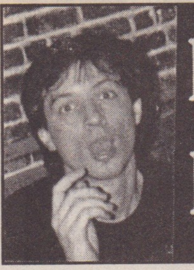

RALL DEAL

Several months ago, employees of Verizon, the company that enjoys a monopoly on local telephone service where I live, confirmed that my telephone has been tapped by the government. (Note to government: No, I won't reveal their names. No, not even if you throw me in jail. Unlike *The New York Times*, I protect my sources. Let's just say they're people in a position to know and leave it at that.)

"I don't mind that Bush is listening to my calls," I told the security department representative who took one of my several requests to replace the bug with a new-and-improved eavesdropping device that wouldn't generate a roar of static. "It's not like I'm calling al Qaeda. And if they called me, I wouldn't be able to hear them because of the noise on the line."

Most Americans feel the same as me. We're not doing anything wrong, so why should we care if the government knows when we're stuck on credit card company permahold? If losing our privacy can prevent another 9/11, isn't it worth it?

No. Hell no.

First and foremost, domestic spying is not an anti-terrorism program. It *is* terrorism.

"We are not trolling through the personal lives of millions of innocent Americans," Bush says. But, in a carbon copy of the Total Information Awareness data-mining project that was shot down in response to a bipartisan public outcry in 2002, that's exactly what the National Security Agency is doing. As *USA Today* reported on May 11, the NSA purchased the complete "call-detail histories" for every customer of the biggest three phone companies: AT&T, BellSouth, and Verizon. "It's the largest database ever assembled in the world," *USA Today* quotes a source. Your government, paying your tax dollars to companies you already paid to place calls you presumed to be private, is trying "to create a database of every call ever made."

According to the paper, the three telecommunications giants also agreed to keep the NSA updated on new calls placed by their combined 230 million customers. (Verizon and BellSouth deny the story, although close cooperation between such companies and intelligence agencies has long been well established.)

The CIA estimates that there are between 2,000 and 10,000 al Qaeda members worldwide. Even if there are dozen or two "sleeper cell" members in the United States, they don't use the phone unless they're complete idiots. NSA data-mining will never uncover a terrorist or terrorist plot.

Then why—why, really—are government spooks sorting through our phone records? Because information is power. Calling logs, coupled with analogous databases of email, wire transfer and fax transmissions, could give the FBI the information it needs to pressure a reluctant witness to turn state's evidence in a crucial case. The SEC could scan for calling clusters between corporate officials and investors in its investigations of insider trading. Politicians could neutralize their rivals by threatening to reveal their personal indiscretions.

If the NSA were truly interested in monitoring and capturing Islamist terrorists, it wouldn't give a damn about your call ordering a large pizza, half pepperoni/half onions. It would buy records from outfits like the satellite telephone company Thuraya, the dominant telecommunications provider in the remote regions of Middle East, Central and South Asia where America's enemies live. Mullah Omar, leader of the Taliban, uses a Thuraya.

It's hard to accept, but the truth is obvious: our government doesn't *want* to catch the 9/11 murderers. After all, Bush could simply call his friend Pervez Musharraf, the military dictator of Pakistan who seized power as a Taliban ally, and ask him to pass the phone over the dinner table to Osama so he could get a Hellfire missile lock from a nearby Predator drone plane.

Americans' first instincts are probably correct. In the short term, most people have little to fear from the NSA data-mining and other domestic surveillance programs. Besides, there's nothing new here. During the 1990s a Clinton-era NSA chief freely admitted to the French magazine *Le Nouvel Observateur* that its Echelon keyword and voice-recognition software system sought to intercept "every communication in the world." Although the current Administration is headed by fascists who would love to toss every Democratic voter into the ovens, they haven't yet managed to transform America into the police state of their dreams.

If I didn't believe there was still plenty of life left in our democracy, after all, would I be writing this?

Still, it is odd to hear the same Americans who would shoot their neighbor for watching them through their bedroom window say they don't care if some faceless bureaucrat listens to them have phone sex. Despite Watergate, Iran-Contra and a hundred other scandals that provide ample evidence for the opposite reaction, most Americans trust the government.

Even if you trust this government, however, there is no way to know what form of government will rule this country in the future. Someday, and this is certain, a revolution or civil disturbance or invasion will topple the system created by the Founding Fathers in 1787. Some successor regime, run by people you don't know and may not like (and more to the point, may not like you), will inherit the security apparatus currently being put into place.

That's what happened in Europe during World War II. When the Germans invaded a country, they inherited its police files and other records. It was easier for the Nazis to find and arrest Jews in nations that listed their citizens' religion in their records.

Right now, you may be a Republican voter living in a red state, and you may find yourself in perfect agreement with your political leaders. What will you do if someone like me becomes president? What about my pal the radical anarchist who believes that the country's salvation lies in murdering every registered Republican? He's a smart guy. You never know.

True, some future American tyrant could order the creation of a huge database of information to track everything you do—if such a thing doesn't already exist. But why make it easy for him? It's smarter to never create such a dangerous set of records in the first place.

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NEW BOOK: *Attitude 3: The New Subversive Online Cartoonists* (NBM Publishing, 128 pp., price $13.95) is out now! You can get the book at any bookstore or comics shop, or on the Internet. It includes cartoons by and interviews with 21 amazing web cartoonists, some political and others just hilarious. Attitude 3 is a great primer on the sometimes-perplexing world of web cartoons and shows an amazing range of artistic creativity. List of cartoonists/strips includes: Rob Balder: "Partially Clips," Dale Beran and David Hellman: "A Lesson is Learned But the Damage is Irreversible," Matt Bors: "Idiot Box," Steven L. Cloud: "Boy on a Stick and Slither," M.e. Cohen: "HumorInk," Chris Dlugosz: "Pixel," Thomas K. Dye: "Newshounds," Mark Fiore: "Fiore Animated Cartoons," Dorothy Gambrell: "Cat and Girl," Nicholas Gurewitch: "The Perry Bible Fellowship," Brian McFadden: "Big Fat Whale," Eric Millikin: "Fetus-X," Ryan North: "Daily Dinosaur Comics," August J. Pollak: "XQUZYPHYR & Overboard," Mark Poutenis: "Thinking Ape Blues," Jason Pultz: "Comic Strip," Adam Rust: "Adam's Rust," D.C. Simpson: "I Drew This" & "Ozy and Millie," Ben Smith: "Fighting Words," Richard Stevens: "Diesel Sweeties," Michael Zole: "Death to the Extremist."

George Tabb sez
Take my life, please!

"So I called the audience 'douchebags,'" explains Paul, as he tells Shari and me about his latest set at CBGB.

"My son uses that kind of language?" asks Shari, as she washes dishes in the kitchen sink in between sneaking PJ and Susie, my Yorkshire Terrorist and her Pomeranian, pieces of pizza.

"I've said a lot worse," I say, as I sit on the couch fiddling with an X-Box 360 controller and wondering if Lara Croft's boobies are real in her latest outing for the machine.

Paul then tells us he's said some stuff that Stiv Bators has said from the *Night Of The Living Dead Boys* album.

I tell him I said those exact things too.

"What do you mean, 'worse'?" asks Shari, as PJ tries to nip Susie, who took *his* pizza. Because, of course, everything is *his*.

"Oh," I say, "you know. The regular punk rock stuff!"

"Wait," says Paul, who is wearing this kick-ass black shirt with thin white stripes that he found neatly folded over on a stoop in my neighborhood, "didn't you once get really mad because of fish?"

"I hate fish," I mumble.

"I'm so sorry about mother's day," says Shari. "I didn't know, I swear!"

I tell her for the umpteenth time that it's OK, and anyway, my nose was stuffy, so I really couldn't smell that horrid odor of those dead swimmy beasts, anyway.

"No," says Paul, "the fish at a show!"

I look at the two of them and wonder if I should tell them about *that* show at The Gilman Street. 924 Gilman. Whatever the fuck they call it these days.

"You had fish at a show?" asks Shari. "You hate fish!"

"It was more like the fish had me," I say, then start to tell her and Paul the story.

"I was on tour with Furious George," I say, "but let me back up a bit."

*

"How does it feel to be playing a club that has a policy of no racist, sexist, or homophobic bands?" asked my pal Aaron, as we drove across the Bay Bridge toward Berkeley.

I just looked at him. Then out the window. We were passing Alcatraz.

"I'd rather be playing there," I said, pointing at the prison on the small island.

"But George," said Evan, the bass player of my band, Furious George, "I thought the Berkeley show was the big one of the tour. The Gilman Street. The place where Green Day and Rancid got their start!"

"Yeah," added Aaron, "Who knows, you guys could become *big* stars!"

I laughed. Sort of. The last time I played at Gilman there was a skinhead riot. This time I expected more of the same. Or worse. And as it turns out, I was right. As usual.

*

After parking to the side of 924 Gilman next to the FYP van, My Worse Half, Aaron, Evan, and I made our way into the club. It was exactly how I remembered it. Graffiti all over the walls, a funny shaped stage, some really bad smells, and really nice people running the place. It was the CBGB of the Left Coast.

"Are you Furious George?" asked some tall kid with stringy hair, a mustache and beard, dirty boots, and shorts. I hate shorts.

"Yeah," I said, kinda meanly. The guy smelled and it was offending my large Jewish nose.

"You guys are awesome. Thanks so much for playing here," the guy said, as he stuck out his hand for me to shake. It was dirty, and his fingernails were caked with filth.

"You're welcome," I muttered, as my hand touched his. Yuck.

The guy then started to explain to me that lots of kids were calling about seeing us and FYP, and there was gonna be a good turn-out. He also explained that we didn't have much of a guest list, that the club was volunteer-run, no booze was allowed anywhere near the club, that he lived in a squat, and that his squatter dog, who was busy sniffing my crotch, was hungry.

"I'll feed him some meat," I said jokingly, as I pushed the dog's face deeper into my groin.

"Oh, he's a vegan," the guy said. "He eats no animal products at all.

Squatters. Whatever.

*

Hours passed, and soon the club was packed. One of the opening bands had this metal chick singer and she was awful. Half the kids in the club plugged up their ears, and the other half went outside. I joined them.

"You George Tabb?" asked some kid as I hung out by the van, watching Todd from FYP, and Michael, our drummer, drink beer.

"Yeah," I said to the tallish guy (normal-looking, and smelly).

"I'm Tom!" he said.

I just looked at him.

"Tom! Shadypunk! From AOL! America On-line!" he exclaimed.

"Tom!" I yelled, and then hugged the guy. "Holy shit, you made it! You rule!"

"Yeah, but I almost didn't," he explained, "they caught me during my day job today."

"They?" I asked.

Tom explained to me that he'd already told me about his day job via email. I told him I didn't remember what it was, but that I did remember that he sent me his band's record, *Sideshow Bob*, and that it ruled.

"The parking meters," Tom explained.

"What about them?" asked Evan, joining in on the conversation.

"I rob them. It's really easy. All you have to do is take a screwdriver and just flip them open. You can get tons of quarters," explained Tom. "I've gotten really good at some video games."

"Punk Rock," I said to him.

"Yeah, it's really great," said Tom, excitedly, "you can make mucho bucks, dude, and the hours rule. But today THE MAN caught me. It was touch and go there for a while, but I came out of it OK."

I told him I was glad, and then changed the subject quickly to his band.

"We are doing great," said Tom, with an honest smile on his face. "We play Pink Rock!"

Tom likes to say that a lot. Pink Rock. He always says that in his emails. I think it maybe has to do with pussy punk. But I'm not sure.

"George," I hear Stoots, bass player from FYP, yell from the van, "wanna beer?"

I tell him I do. Tom asks for one as well. The next thing I know we are sitting on the corner, drinking beers out of cans, and Tim Yohannan, the editor of *Maximumrocknroll*, comes walking by.

"Hey, George," says Tim.

"Hey, shortie," I say back to him. Tim is kind of height-challenged.

"Excited about tonight's show?" asks Tim, with genuine concern. He's one of the few people older than me left who still likes punk rock.

I tell him I am.

Tim starts to tell me that he remembers the last time I played Gilman, and how we fought off skinheads together. Many years earlier. I tell him I remember it well.

As we continue to talk, I start to smell something really weird. At first I think it's something from the club, because people keep going in and out of the place, and it did stink, but the stench just got stronger and stronger.

"Our new record is really good Tim, right?" I say to him, not leaving him much room to answer the question honestly.

"Yeah," says Tim, "It is really good. But can I ask you one thing?"

I ask him what, as the odor becomes so strong I almost puke. I look over to my side and watch Tom drinking his beer. The kid must be cutting really bad ones, or else it's Tim.

"Why are you guys sitting over a sewer grate?"

Doh.

*

"How much is the water?" I ask the little punk rock girl with the mohawk behind the counter. It's really hot in the club, and we are about to play. Our equipment is set up, the place is packed, and our Furious George banner is flying high. Behind our amps.

"Where are you from?" asks the punkette.

"What does it matter?" I say. "How much is the water?"

"Where are you from?" asks the girl again, with more force in her voice.

"Not here, Toots," I tell her.

"Well, how far away do you live?" she asks. She's about thirteen, I figure, judging from the training bra hanging out of the sides of her tank top.

"Far away," I say. "New York City. Now, how much for the water?"

"Well," she explains, "If you live more than a hundred miles away, the water is free. Because you are a touring band. If you are local, the bottled water is one dollar."

"I'll take my free water," I tell the kid, as I look at her outie belly button.

"Free? Do you live over a hundred miles away?" she asks.

"New York City is pretty far," I tell her.

"Over a hundred miles?" she asks.

I wind up just giving her money for the water just to fucking shut her up. Then I tell her to buy a map. I love the kids.

*

"Hey, we're Furious George from fucking New York City, and you're a sorry ass sucker" I yell into the mic, and then the band starts playing.

We do our first three songs in our leather jackets, and the audience seems into it. Some kids up front know the lyrics and sing along. The club is packed all the way to the back exit, and for a few moments there, I thought we might have a normal show. That thought ended during our fourth song, "Bananas."

That's when it happened. The worst thing to ever happen to me on stage in my life. And some bad things have happened. I've been stripped naked. I've pissed my pants. I've been called terrible names. I've been hit, kicked, spit on, and even pooped in my underwear once. But what happened next makes those things happy memories. What happened next was so bad that even thinking about it now makes me want to vomit. What happened next was—fish.

And I hate fish.

We had just started our fourth song, and suddenly I see Evan being covered in a fine white dust. Some kid is shaking a bag of something at him. I grin, and that's when I feel it. Something hit my teeth and lands in my mouth. I stop singing the song, but continue to play. When it's time to let a chord ring out, I reach into my mouth and pull out a white bloody thing. I look at it and have no idea what it is. Then the taste hits me.

Fish.

Rotten fish. Some fuckhead threw rotten fish at me, and it landed in my mouth.

Fuck.

I look over at Evan, and he is as white as a ghost. I looked back at Michael, on the drums, and see him covered with some white slop of some kind.

Then I feel something hit me in the back of the head and ear. I look on the ground to see what it is, and almost barf. It's a bloody hoof. From some kind of animal. Then I touch my ear and feel something hanging from it. I tug on it, and a bunch of bloody meat falls out.

I stop playing.

Evan stops playing.

Michael stops playing. And he's a drummer.

Suddenly we all get covered with mustard. As do the amps we are borrowing from FYP, and the drum set.

Then it's rotten cream. Sour cream. Rancid, and really smelly.

Then it's more fish. A lot more fish. So much fish that it's raining fish. All over us.

I start to gag and almost puke. The odor of fish has made me ill since I was a kid, and now I was covered with it. It was my worst nightmare. I looked down at my guitar and it was covered with fish. That's when I blew my top.

"Who threw the fucking fish?" I yell into the microphone.

All the kids just stare at us.

Suddenly Michael hops out from behind the drum set and runs into the audience, looking for the guilty parties. Evan does the same, and then I join them.

The next thing we know we are walking around among the crowd during our set, looking for the assholes. We are all covered in gook, and everyone runs away from us as we near them. Finally we get back on stage.

"Who threw the fucking fish?" I ask again, looking at the amp I am playing through, and seeing fish guts inside the equalizer and plug-in jack.

The audience is silent. No one says anything.

"Who threw the fucking fish?" I say again, as I take off my shirt. It stunk like hell, as did the rest of me. I feel like Carrie at her high school prom.

"Can I have your shirt?" asks some kid from the front row. I tell him maybe later.

"Who threw the stuff?" asks Evan into his mic.

Silence.

"OK," I say into the mic, "we are gonna quit playing now. We came all the way from New York, and we'll leave. Fuck you!"

I take off my guitar and start to pack it up.

"I did it," says some kid with a beard and mohawk. He's dirty, and looks like a squatter.

"Really?" I ask him, all nice and stuff.

"Yeah!" he exclaims, "pretty funny, huh?"

I tell him it's a real hoot and walk off the stage toward him. I taste the rotten fish in my mouth, and feel the mustard in my hair.

As I approach him, he smiles at me and holds up his backpack, which I guess is full of the rotten food.

"Time for you to leave," I say as calmly as possible.

"You can't throw me out," he says.

I grab the kid by his shirt, and literally pick him up off the ground.

"I'm gonna throw your ass out now, bucko," I say, teeth clenched. "You are lucky I don't kick your ass. If you even so much as flinch, I'm gonna knock your teeth down your throat and make you wish you were never born." And I mean it.

I then carried the guy to the door nearest the stage, dropped him, opened the door, and then pushed him out, real hard. All the while the audience starts to boo.

"Have a great night, fuckhead," I say as I kick the guy in the ass real hard, and shut the door in his face.

"But, dude," he says from behind the door, but I ignore him and walk back up on stage with Evan and Michael.

"Anyone else up for an ass kicking?" I say into the fish smelling mic, totally serious.

The kids just look at us, terrified.

"All right then," I say, "we will now continue our set."

"Fuck you," a few kids yell.

I ignore them and tell the band we'll now start the next song.

"You guys suck!" yells someone else. "You guys are assholes" is yelled next.

"We're assholes?" I say, "We're from New York, and if you little Berkeley pussies don't shut up, we're gonna kick your asses, pussies!"

Suddenly the whole place goes nuts and kids start screaming and yelling at us. For real.

"Fuck you, Furious George," I hear. "You guys are old!" I also hear.

"Listen you little PC fucks," I say, "you people don't have a fucking clue about anything. Save the Trees. Save the Whales. Keep out the Mexicans. Fuck you. Suck my dick!"

And with that, of course I pulled out my pecker.

The booing got louder, as did the insults. Some girl actually called me fat.

"Listen, little lady," I say to her, "Why don't you wipe your dad's cum off your face before coming to a punk rock show!"

More name calling and jeering follow.

"I thought they didn't allow racist, sexist, or homophobic bands to play here!" yells some guy in a Bratmobile t-shirt.

I look at him, and then over at FYP, Aaron and My Worse Half. They all have real worried looks on their faces. This was getting out of control. And, I have to admit, it felt great. Just like the old days.

"Racist, sexist, and homophobic?" I say into the mic.

I look into the back of the room and see the sound guys, and the guys who run the club. They are actually laughing. They are enjoying it.

"First of all, it's sexy!" I say, with a fake English accent ala Spinal Tap.

"Fuck you! Nazi!" they yell.

"Second of all, fuck you all, you little faggots!" I say.

Suddenly there is a big push toward the front and kids start swinging at us on stage. I try to kick a few of them, or hit them with my guitar, but they get away.

"Who wants some?" I yell, "Who wants some?"

I think that's when I went completely crazy. I'd been on tour for a little over a week, and I think it all just hit then. I was calling our fans "faggots" and trying to beat them up. I was supposed to love the kids, but right then I felt complete and utter hatred for the little pussies. It was the fish that probably did it. But it didn't matter. I was wrong. I'd lost my mind, and was taking out my frustrations on the kids. I had become someone I hated. And I enjoyed it. I was having fun.

"OK, pussies," I said, "we are gonna continue our set."

"Yeah," said Evan, "and it's really great to be here where Green Day and Rancid got their start!"

This time the kids yelled at Evan, and then we started our next song. And the next. And the next.

The whole time we were playing, I felt myself on that thin ledge of sanity/insanity. I knew that if something else were to happen, I might completely lose it and kill someone. I let myself remain on the ledge because it just felt so goddamn good. So fun.

We finally stopped playing after about five or so songs, and the audience just booed and booed.

"OK, you hippies," I said, as we prepared for our last song, "we are gonna do one more. But since this is Berkeley, we are gonna change the words to make it politically correct."

Michael took out our signs for "Gilligan" and I held them up to the audience.

The first sign read "I wear a white hat", but I read it to the crowd as "I wear a multi-colored hat!"

The audience booed.

The second sign read "I wear a red shirt," but I read it out loud as "I wear a multi-colored shirt!"

Hissing. And spit.

The third sign read "They all think I'm stupid," and I read it as "They all think I'm mentally challenged!"

"Fuck you," they started chanting.

I looked over at the sound board and the club guys were laughing so hard they were almost crying. I waved to them and they waved back. Then they put on silly sunglasses and made faces at me. I looked over at FYP and My Worse Half, who still looked scared.

"One day I'll kill them" was what the fourth sign said, but I read it as "One day I'll hire a lawyer and sue for my rights," was what I said.

"Fuck you," they continued chanting, and started to drown out my voice.

So I gave up.

"Fuck you," I said to them, then threw down my guitar and walked off stage, Evan and Michael followed.

Then the audience started cheering wildly, whistling, and everything. I'd never seen a crowd so happy. Having so much fun. They were slapping each other on the back, and clapping for at least two minutes.

I guess we were a success.

*

About two hours later, while loading up the van with our now smelly equipment, I got into a conversation with the guy I talked to earlier with the shorts and the dog. He told us he thought we were great, and really funny. He also told us we were welcome back anytime.

"Even after all that?" I asked him.

"Especially after all that," was his reply.

I was stunned.

"You opened their eyes, dude," he explained, "they hear the same PC stuff all day, and it's just words to them now. They don't do anything to save the world. They just wear the correct t-shirt, say the right things, go to punk shows, hear the same bands say the same things, and are part of their own little clique. The whole city of Berkeley is its own little clique."

I just looked at the guy.

"But you guys," he continued, "You guys showed them up for what they really are. You came in here, called them names, got them mad, and made them think. They may have all felt comfortable saying their phony rhetoric before tonight, but after, I don't think so. You showed them what humor is, and what hypocrites they really are."

"Really?" I asked the guy, who wasn't smelling so bad anymore.

"Really. You are one of the best bands to ever play here. And your message may be one of the most important messages anyone can have. Have fun. No one says that anymore. They say all the other stuff. But you say have fun. And that rules, dude!"

I thanked the guy for the kind words, and asked him if I could hug him. He was really cool, and really made me feel really good.

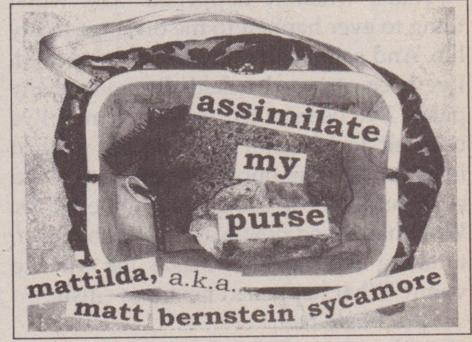
"Dude," he said, "I'd love to hug you. Really. But man, you really fucking stink. Try taking a shower, OK?"

Take My Life, Please.

Ya douchebags.

Endnotes:

1. www.georgetabb.com
2. I've been more than a bit ill lately. Please check my website for that info. It involves 9/11 and it sucks.
3. Again, I miss Tim Yohannon, the guy who started this magazine...which is still the most liberating use of a tree I've ever seen.



Nobody Passes?

Okay, for quite some time I've been focusing on the issue of assimilation—in my writing, in my activism, and in the world (not to say that my writing and activism don't take place in the world). My last anthology, *That's Revolting! Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation* focuses on challenging the horrors of mainstream gay culture, the ways in which gay people with power are anxious to erase generations of queer struggles that have created new ways of living with, loving, lusting after and taking care of one another... in order to further a vapid, consume or die, only-whites-need-apply version of gay identity. This is how the issues I call the holy trinity—marriage, military service and adoption—have become the central focus of gay struggle. I could talk about all this forever (I have...and I will continue to), but what I want to write about now is how *That's Revolting*! paved the way for my next anthology, *Nobody Passes: Rejecting the Rules of Gender and Conformity.*

This new book came about because I wanted to think about passing as the mechanism by which the violence of assimilation occurs. My goal was to talk about all kinds of passing—across lines of gender, race, class, sexuality, age, ability, body type, health status, ethnicity, religion, political beliefs, educational background, exercise trend, fashion cult, etc. The question I wanted to ask was if we eliminate the requirement to pass, what delicious and devastating opportunities for transformation might we create?

At the time when I thought of this new book idea, I already had two books in mind: one about the intersections of Jewish assimilation, identity and resistance, and the other an intervention I now call *Why Are Faggots so Afraid of Faggots?: Flaming Challenges to Masculinity, Objectification and the Desire to Conform*. You can see how both of these anthology ideas also relate to assimilation. One of my goals in life is certainly to challenge assimilation in all its forms, whenever possible (or even when impossible).

Just when I had decided to start with the book about Jewish assimilation, something interesting occurred. An editor at Seal Press contacted me after reading an interview with me in *Bitch*—the interview was great because it included entire paragraphs that I'd spoken, and a glamorous photo shoot (there was also a delicious interview in *MRR* around the same time). Anyway, this editor said that she would love to publish one of my books, and what was I working on now?

Well, it's moments like these that you certainly have to take advantage of—or I do, anyway. Seal Press is a feminist press with the tagline, *"Books By Women. For Women."* I knew immediately that the book I wanted to do about passing would be the one that would fit best at Seal—not only that, but the fact that it was on Seal would actually amplify the intentions of the book—to challenge all hierarchies of belonging, and create new possibilities for defiance. Furthermore, I've wanted my work to be positioned more clearly within feminist discourse, so this felt like a great opportunity. If the editor's name on the cover already isn't passing, what devious jewels could exist inside?

And yes, while this wasn't exactly the book Seal had in mind, they loved the idea. Nevertheless, even though it was they who'd contacted me, the passing questions began. First, "what is your gender identity?" I replied: I would identify as a genderqueer faggot and a queen, meaning that I'm somewhere on the trans continuum, in the genderblur gender-bending section. I use female pronouns and identify as femme, but I'm not necessarily invested in people seeing me as either "male" or "female." Rather, I'd like to create something more delectable and devious.

I continued by adding that I developed my feminist politics early, in the process of surviving that good old-fashioned laboratory of patriarchal family violence known colloquially as "home." By seventh grade, I witnessed many of my female friends developing crushes on the misogynist, queer-bashing boys we used to hate together, and I—like many young feminists—decided that all penetrative sex was rape. I grew into a more sexually-liberated feminism around radical dykes dedicated to politicizing every aspect of identity. Though I started having sex with men at an early age, it took me years to hang out with fags and it is still difficult for me to befriend any male-assigned (or male-identified) person not fiercely committed to wreaking feminist gender havoc."

Second question: "how is this book relevant to women?" Oh no—Feminism 101. I replied first with a specific angle (publishers love hooks): Passing is an extremely topical issue right now, especially in feminist, queer, and trans circles where an increasing number of female-assigned people are choosing to transition from female to male. Unfortunately, there is little public discussion about what happens when one transitions into privilege, and how to ensure that this passing does not further anti-woman, anti-feminine, or anti-queer violence. This much-needed discussion will most certainly take place within this new anthology.

Then I tried to summarize the general issues that I was certain Seal was aware of. I start by saying that more broadly speaking, misogynist violence has historically functioned to police women who fail to perform socially-assigned roles properly—and those who choose consciously to defy the rules. Women who have not passed—as sufficiently feminine, sexy, motherly, docile, pure, fertile, proper, compliant—or as good cooks, caregivers, housekeepers, maids or servants—have suffered derision, ostracism, imprisonment, and murder. While this pattern has certainly shifted, it has not abated. In order to rigorously combat misogynist violence, we must do away with the requirement to pass.

Guess what? I passed, so well in fact that the editor then stated that since I was an expert on gender and sexuality, the book should focus on these two types of passing. But that's not what I wanted to do! In my next passing letter, I declared: In terms of focus for the book, my goal is to challenge standards of authenticity, destroy notions of acceptability, and create new possibilities for defiance. While I certainly intend to use gender and sexuality as central lenses through which to view and dismantle the mechanisms of passing, I would not like to limit the project to this framework. Rather, I feel strongly that the book as a whole will be more interesting, politically relevant and accessible—and inspire a deeper level of understanding and innovation—if it takes on all types of passing. It's the refusal to restrict categories of inclusion that opens up the possibility for the most rigorous work—work that skewers all hierarchies and builds something new in the ruins.

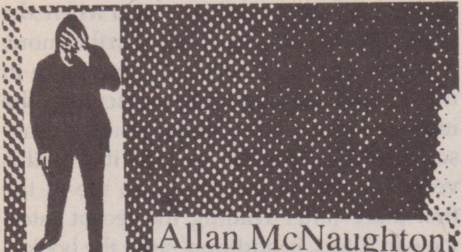
As far as my own experience with passing (or not passing), though I am certainly an expert in the areas of gender and sexuality, I—like most people—have also encountered, confronted and experienced the perilous intersections of race, class, age, ability, body type, health status, ethnicity, and other passing categorizations. In fact, much of my activism over the years has focused around developing a radical queer politic that insists on seeing issues of race and class as central to queer struggle—especially around police brutality, gentrification, urban removal, homelessness, racist scapegoating, prison profiteering and US imperialism. You mention that some of your colleagues think it might actually be irresponsible to tackle all aspects of passing in one anthology, but I would maintain just the reverse—that it would be irresponsible *not to* tackle issues of race, class, age, ability, body type, health status, ethnicity, etc. within a book confronting the notion that passing equals progress *and* that the book will only grow stronger by taking on this challenge. Perhaps this is an area where the book breaks new ground. Furthermore, rest assured that I have full confidence in my ability to eloquently articulate the intersections of all of these issues in any sort of public forum—in fact, it was this very skill that attracted you to me in the first place (after reading the recent interview in *Bitch*). In addition, since the book is an anthology, one of its strengths will certainly be a wide range of contributions expressing firsthand accounts and critiques of passing that will go well beyond my personal experience.

I continued by saying that with this anthology, I would like to ask the question: if we eliminate the requirement to pass, what delicious and devastating opportunities for transformation might we create? I do not think that the project will adequately address this question unless it includes the widest possible range of responses. If, after I put out the call for submissions, I find that the pieces I've received center overwhelmingly around sex and gender, to the exclusion of other types of passing, then I would have no problem shifting the focus of the anthology. As of now, though, I have high hopes of receiving a wide range of contributions that confront every possible aspect of identity, categorization and community in order to challenge the very notion of belonging.

Now, I know I was getting repetitive, but sometimes you have to be a little repetitive in order to get your point across (at least, I find that I do). Anyway, I was going to continue here by telling a whole new passing story—the ways in which I've passed as able-bodied while editing this anthology, and now that I'm one month away from my final deadline and I'm frantic, yet because of all my chronic pain and exhaustion, I can't sit down and edit for 12 hours in a row or something (or even two hours in a row). But now I feel like I'm running out of room. I will save this story for the future—until then, wish me luck with the editing process.

Love –
mattilda

Mattilda, aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore is the editor, most recently, of That's Revolting! Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation *(Soft Skull 2004) and the author of* Pulling Taffy *(Suspect Thoughts 2003). Mattilda lives for feedback, so send her love letters and/or delicious threats via the recently updated www.mattbernsteinsycamore.com, which includes past MRR columns. Or write to PO Box 640047, San Francisco, CA 94164-0047.*



"The advancement of Christ's Kingdom among Boys and the promotion of habits of Reverence, Discipline, Self-Respect, Obedience, and all that tends towards a true Christian Manliness."

When I was a young lad I really wanted to join the Boy Scouts. It ran in the family—my Papa had been a Scout leader (Akela or something) and my uncle had been a Scout. My mum and aunt were Girl Guides, and their whole family used to go to camps and jamborees together. When it was my turn to carry on the tradition, religious sectarianism got in the way. In Newmains, the Scouts met at the Chapel hall. Protestant boys joined The Boys Brigade, a less popular group that predated Baden-Powell's Scouts by about twenty years.

While the Scouts seemed to do all kinds of interesting and fun activities in pursuit of their merit badges, the Boys Brigade seemed to think that the best way to pursue The Object (that paragraph in quotes at the start of this column) was to force us to march. Week in, week out, we marched. We marked time. We saluted. I wanted to be out in the countryside learning stuff. Instead I marched round and round the same hall where I did PE at school, dressed in a uniform befitting the Hitler Youth, with some weird Christian tie-in that I wasn't into either.

The whole thing seemed designed to get us started down a path that would end with us joining the regular military. In fact, the BB was started by a soldier-turned-Sunday-school teacher who thought it would be a good way to instill order and discipline in his unruly students.

It wasn't all marching. There were also the occasional homoerotic episodes that seem to occur whenever you put a group of grown men who are overly fond of "discipline" in charge of a bunch of young boys bursting forth with the bounty of impending manhood. Like the time we all had to dress up in cheerleader outfits (complete with wigs, makeup, and pom-poms) and mime along to Toni Basil's hit "Hey Mickey." I wish this was a joke.

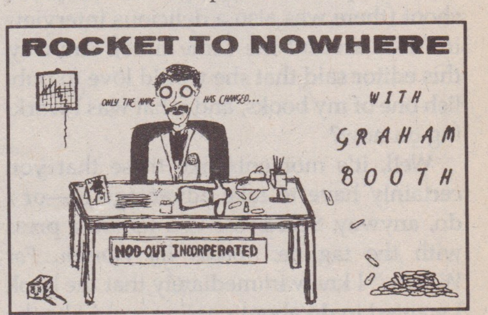
We did make it out into the fresh air and the countryside once a year. It had been years since the BB uniform had included imitation muskets, but once off at camp, the boyish fascination with weaponry of all sorts was allowed free reign. For a wee fanny I was actually a pretty good shot with a bow and arrow or an air rifle, but the one time I had a living thing in my sights (a rabbit) I deliberately aimed high and missed, only to be met with scorn and ridicule.

If I could go back and talk to the twelve-year-old me, I'd ask me why a boy who was bullied incessantly at school would willingly join and then choose to continue to attend an organization where he would be routinely bullied *outside* of school as well. I doubt my twelve-year-old alter ego would have much of an answer, but I suppose I must have thought it would build character or something. Actually, I must have got *something* out of it, but whatever it was, it escapes me now.

Eventually, I got a paper round, and it was the type where you had to go round on Friday nights and collect the money. This meant extra work, but it also meant you got tips. If you worked for a news agents where people dropped in and paid their bill at the shop, you never saw any extra money. But faced with a fresh-faced, hard-working young lad on his own doorstep, what upstanding citizen isn't going to say "keep the change," or even dip into his pocket for an extra ten bob? (The actual answer is, quite a few people, especially from the posh houses, and they're the bastards who get the big heavy papers as well!)

At any rate, having the paper round meant that I could no longer attend the Boys Brigade on Friday nights. Now I had extra money in my pocket, and I was free from the shackles and the uniform of the junior fascist Christian bullyboy league! Result!

As usual: PO Box 22971, Oakland, CA 94609 or allan@dropout.cc.



Dood! I don't know about you guys, but out here the summer garage sale circuit is back in full swing. Let's be honest: I'm not going to garage sales with very high expectations, specially in the current era of eBay. Peddlers of dank trash in driveways everywhere are consistently playing the dreaded "eBay Card," fully recognizing they are far too sweaty and lazy to actually list anything on the auction site. I hold eBay personally responsible for the worldwide used vinyl rate hike...yesterday's 50 cents is today's two dollars.

Despite the extortive prices and fiendish competition (you should really see some of these people), I've still managed to fare pretty well. Of course, I don't go there looking for "punk" records. Maybe one in ten sales has anything remotely even, er, "punk-ish™." I've heard of people finding treasure troves of rare punk records at garage sales, but I've never gotten more than a thin handful at one time. Rather, I see a garage sale as a great way to take a chance on something new, or something you've heard about but never actually heard. A buck or two is hard to beat, especially considering you may even make your money back on the rejects at your local used record store.

I was blown away a couple weeks ago when I actually found a record on my want-list, which is pretty small these days. While hardly a huge deal, by garage sale standards this was a milestone. My wife plucked a minty fresh first DIE KREUZEN self-titled LP (Touch & Go) out of a box of BOSTON and JOURNEY right before my eyes. For a buck, we didn't even bother to pull the record out of the sleeve until we were walking back to the car. Sure enough, it was on *maroon vinyl!*

For the uninitiated, the first DIE KREUZEN LP is a criminally under-appreciated Midwest hardcore rager. I'd prolly pick it over any of its (Touch & Go) rival full lengths (NEGATIVE APPROACH, NECROS, duh?). Be Warned: if it's not the DIE KREUZEN album with a yellow and black bug cover, you'll probably want to stay away! But that first album, along with the *Cows and Beer* 7" EP, is essential US hardcore. For the collector scum, I've heard unconfirmed rumors that just 200 copies were pressed on *maroon vinyl*. Time to get hunting...

While the DIE KREUZEN LP was a nice find, I've already heard the album so many times that, musically speaking, it wasn't really anything new. This past weekend's score has me far more excited, if only because it seems so unlikely. A family was selling off their father's estate—don't worry, he isn't dead yet—and had quite an accumulation of boxes of stuff. There were housewares, linens, magazines, books, records—you name it. Unfortunately for us, there was no order whatsoever...just throw it in a box and forget about it. It wasn't a matter of flipping through records—it was a matter of finding little stashes of records in about 50 boxes strewn all over the garage and spilling out into the street.

And what did I find? Lots of little piles of jazz records. Most from the '50s and '60s, nothing very interesting: big band stuff, and most of it really trashed. Not really my thing. But buried in with everything there was one record that caught my eye. It had a kinda psychedelic exploito-looking cover, and at first glance, I guessed it was some '60s lounge/easy listening album. All the titles were in Spanish, and there were no photos. Had I not recognized one name, I surely would've passed it up, but there it was, in plain, er, Spanish: "EL RITUAL." I flipped it over, and sure enough, it was a compilation from Mexico with several bands including EL RITUAL doing "Satanas," among others. I remembered seeing their album years ago, with elaborate Satanic artwork, on the wall of a record store for several hundred dollars. This record was a little scratchy, but I figured it was worth a couple bucks at least, and maybe some of the bands were interesting. I bought it for a buck.

I got home a little later that day and tried doing my usual internet research on the compilation *La Onda Gruesa* (RAFF) 1972. I couldn't find any listings for it, although I did find some other releases on the same label from Mexico, including records by other bands on the compilation, like THREE SOULS IN MY MIND, COSA NOSTRA, and GRUPO OZ. Most of them were priced at several hundred dollars (yikes!) I'd given up on finding information on my specific record, but all those names and the psychedelic cover had me drooling to start listening...surely there was something good here.

The first side featured PEACE AND LOVE, IGUANA, THREE SOULS IN MY MIND, LOS ELEMENTOS, and COSA NOSTRA. It became immediately apparent that horns were a big part in Mexican popular music in the early '70s. Most of these groups teetered between horn rock and Latin funk/soul...pretty good, but not my bag. I had high expectations for EL RITUAL starting off the B-side, and a promising acid rock freakout intro had me psyched, but things eventually succumbed to more, albeit interesting, horn rock. GRUPO OZ and LOVE ARMY didn't do much more for me.

Buried in the middle of the B-side, however, was an unexpected gem by so-called "GRUPO CIRUELA." Remember, this is from Mexico circa 1972. Imagine my surprise to be hearing their full-on BLACK SABBATH worship, crudely produced hard rock with dueling guitar leads and high-speed drum breaks. I can't think of many American bands that were channeling SABBATH this early—maybe PENTAGRAM? So to be hearing a band from Mexico do it, and do it good, was totally mind-blowing. Why haven't I heard of them before?

A bit more research, and I was able to dig up a CIRUELA website chock full of tasty photos from their early days, burning candles and all (saulsoto.tripod.com). A live stage shot was particularly priceless. If there was any suspicion that the SABBATH comparison was purely coincidental, the pictures definitely suggest otherwise. In fact, CIRUELA is apparently often called the Mexican BLACK SABBATH.

All's I know is, I sure as hell never woulda heard of this band had I not woken up last Saturday morning to scour the tag sales. Be sure to add them to your list of must-hear '70s hard rock such as CAPTAIN BEYOND (hologram cover), SIR LORD BALTIMORE, THIRD WORLD WAR, THREE MAN ARMY, EDGAR-BROUGHTON BAND *Wasa-Wasa*, BUDGIE, PINK FAIRIES, AMON DUUL *II Yeti*, HAWKWIND, etc. (you guessed it, I found many of these at garage sales too). Now get digging!

OK, so I'm going to eschew the usual sociopolitical content this month. Actually—not completely. The past few weeks have really sucked. On the weekend of May 14-15, our area was deluged with an insane, intense rainstorm. It pretty much rained non-stop for a few days and the rainfall was in the double digits. My city of Peabody got about a dozen inches. I forget the exact amount, but it was more than enough to cause massive flooding—the worst flooding in the area in almost 70 years. Downtown Peabody was under four feet of water. They had to call in the National Guard. It was a mess, to say the least. People were evacuated. It wasn't just Peabody—it was all over Massachusetts and northern New England. Rt. 1, one of the main roads into Boston, was shut down for two days due to flooding. There were worries about bridges collapsing up in the Merrimack Valley region (up near the New Hampshire line). It was national news. I had people contacting me from around the country to make sure we were all right. Hell, it even got parodied on *Saturday Night Live,* with a fake Anderson Cooper CNN newscast and Rachel Dratch playing a woman from Peabody who kept referring to the anchor as "Coopah."

Ellen and I weren't nearly as fucked as others around here. My neighbor at the bottom of the street had his basement flooded. There was a three-foot puddle at that low point of the street for a few hours and another neighbor made the mistake of attempting to drive her van through it... it had to be fished out by the fire department and it was in pretty rough shape.

The Red Cross was on our street, finding out if anyone required assistance. FEMA funding is now available—yeah, I'm really confident about their competence, given what happened with Hurricane Katrina. Actually, since many of the victims were Caucasian, maybe they'll be more responsive. Come on—it's probably not far from the truth that not much was done at first due to the color of the people who lived in some sections of that city. Brownie (Michael Brown) is out as the head of FEMA now, so he will no longer be able to do a heckuva job. Thank goodness for that. When a FEMA helicopter flew over our area, my neighbor Ronnie gave it the finger.

Speaking of Ronnie, I owe him a lot for helping out during the last few weeks. He helped me assess the situation and gave me advice on what to do. At our house, the downstairs got a fair amount of water. Not standing water, except for a few inches in the boiler room, but the rugs got soaked through, we lost a few minor items in the closet off the bathroom, and there has been mold to deal with. Ronnie loaned me his wet/dry vac and I spent a few days pulling up water. He loaned me other tools as well. Hell, he let me borrow his lawnmower since mind is inaccessible. It's at the back of the garage, blocked by all of the furniture from the two rooms.

To answer the inevitable question—no, I didn't lose any of my music collection. I only keep CDs downstairs and I got them out of there. We don't have a basement—our house is a raised ranch and when you walk in the door, that's where my office/den area is. I knew we were in trouble when I walked downstairs on Sunday morning and saw water coming through the rug. So everything important got moved upstairs—stereo equipment, DJ gear, computer, etc.

In my panic, I called in a carpet cleaning company without doing much checking on them. A week went by and I was still trying to figure out what to do and the smell down there was quite awful. This was about a week after the flood, after I had boxed up and stored all of my CDs and books downstairs. Not a lot of fun, but it made room for the carpet crew. After the fact, Ellen found out that they had a very poor service record and were basically scammers. They did various tasks at an inflated price—removing padding, moving furniture, disinfecting—then they didn't come back for almost a week.

To make a long story short, we were out a fair amount of money, but on the plus side, we got some insurance money. Also, after planning to clean the carpet, another option became unexpectedly available. My brother-in-law volunteered to install carpeting in one room and PVC flooring in the other at cost.

So right now, it's barren downstairs. I pulled up the rest of the carpeting, bleached the floor, and the stench is gone at least. It'll probably be a few more weeks until we're back to normal, but it could have been a lot worse.

This isn't the first time it's happened in Peabody—the flooding, that is. There have been flooding problems downtown for years. It seems to happen every few years, or has since '96 or so. I won't even get into the subject of these "hundred-year storms" happening a lot more frequently. Nah—the environment can't be fucked up, can it?!

In 2004, there was some state aid earmarked to help alleviate the flooding problems. A supplemental budget that would have provided $5.7 million in aid to find a solution to the flooding problems was vetoed by our Republican governor Mitt Romney, whose (mis)deeds I've lamented in this and other spaces many times. Romney is gearing up for a presidential run in 2008 and has been veering sharply to the right on social issues. He's always been a fiscal reactionary, a heartless venture capitalist type who only sees numbers, not the human condition—a smiling, smooth, photogenic presence that masks a cruel exterior. He's governor because the Democrat, Shannon O'Brien, ran a lousy campaign in 2004. Hell, I didn't vote for her. She was too conservative for me, so I opted for Jill Stein, the Green party candidate. I imagine O'Brien would probably have been better than Mitt the Shit.

Romney is trying to build up his tax cutting bona fides. Also, Peabody is traditionally a heavily Democratic city, although it's more of a blue collar, conservative type of Democrat. Our district's state rep, Joyce Spiliotis, is against gay marriage and in favor of the death penalty, for instance.

In an ironic twist, I'm fairly certain that Romney carried Peabody by about a 55 to 45 percent margin. I'm going strictly from memory here, but I was quite astonished. Just another reason I sometimes refer to this city as "Stupidville." It doesn't matter how Peabody voted; Romney still vetoed the funds. He claimed he didn't have enough information to approve it. Another slap in the face came when Romney visited Peabody after the floods—visiting the disaster that perhaps could have been alleviated somewhat if the funds hadn't been vetoed. I'm not saying it would have been a panacea for all the problems, but it would have been a step in the right direction. He claims he wants to help Peabody recover. Once again, a political ploy to show, dammit, he cares.

A few years ago, there was a voter referendum that would have pushed back the state income tax from 5.3 percent to 5 percent. It passed easily, although the legislature has refused to enact it. In all honesty, I'm not in favor of it.

State budget cuts have pushed social services to the brink. That's been going on since the early 90's, when Bill Weld, a social liberal/fiscal nazi, went into slashing mode regarding social programs. Ellen has seen the resulting problems firsthand in her years as a worker at a state-run group home and as a social worker. Kerry Murphy Healey, the wife of a billionaire and the current lieutenant governor, is a Weld clone. Moderate to liberal on social issues (except the death penalty) but another one of those tax-cutting types.

If the tax rate does, indeed, go back to five percent, there are going to be further budget cuts and you can bet your sweet ass it's going to affect the most vulnerable. Do you think for one second that there will be more money available for these types of issues? Or will it come out of another social services program?

So here I sit in my relocated office a.k.a. one of the bedrooms, looking outside at the ominous skies and wondering if I have to worry about the effect yet another rainstorm will have on us...

REVIEW SECTION:
BAFABEGIYA/ACTS OF SEDITION - Split (Spacement, LP)

For want of a better term, each band on this split LP has a strong message and an emotional delivery. Bafabegiya have moved a bit beyond the thrashy hardcore of their earliest recordings. The songs on their side of the split have a lot of burn and aggression but there are melodic nuances and a bit more complexity. Nothing diluted—an intense and searing attack. Acts of Sedition have searing moments themselves. There's the commonality with Bafabegiya of having a hoarse vocalist and tinkering with the thrash-only mode while not losing focus. (269 Wonder St., Reno, NV 89502, www.spacementreno.com)

BAIL OUT – Another One Bites The Dust (Rosewater, CD)

Now-defunct band of hardcore rippers who don't take themselves too seriously. Anthology time, compiling the standard EPs and splits—a live set and some cover songs. Fast, fun hardcore punk stuff, even with the double-speed compositions coming across as a bit generic. Reading the titles provides a laugh as well—"I Got Rejected For A Ska Kid from Canada," "Funky Radical Comp Track," and "In A Related Story, Jesus Has Quit."(PO Box 41005, Bethesda, MD 20824, www.rosewaterrecords.com)

BRAIN HANDLE – s/t (Fashionable Idiots, 7" EP)

Released pretty quickly after their first EP and it's another scorcher. Hardcore punk rock—adding the rock because there's some of that in their sound. Two fast ones and two that are more mid-tempo. As with their first EP, there are edgy guitar lines weaving in and out of the riff-punch. I've liked everything I've heard by this band so far. (PO Box 580131, Minneapolis, MN 55458, www.fashionableidiots.com)

DC SNIPERS – Missile Sunset (Dead Beat, CD)

When one has to listen to formulaic album after formulaic album (and write formulaic review after formulaic review), something occasionally comes along to break the monotony. The DC Snipers are one of those bands. Guitar, bass, drums, keyboards, and slightly nervous vocals. A nervy sound as well, with elements of garage, new wave and what the Minutemen might call scientist rock—that gnarled mid-70's proto-punk sound. "All Humans Are Garbage" is a lyrical sentiment I can get behind, as well, even though it's one of the weaker songs on the album. That's only in relative terms. Nothing weak about this album. (PO Box 283, LA, CA 90073, www.dead-beat-records.com)

MASSGRAV / DISKONTO – A Blaze In The Northern Sky (Sound Pollution, CD)

I'll resist the temptation to alliterate on the album's title. Let's just get to the facts. Two pillaging Swedish bands—short songs and hammering sounds. Massgrav, in particular, go for the hyper-fast sound, occasionally slowing it down while making fun of slow music. DRI meets Swedish hardcore without the Dis-thing. Following me here? Diskonto tend to keep things to a slightly less frantic pace (relatively speaking) but that's not to say they're slacking in the speed department. More of a traditional rumble along with some rock 'n roll inspiration. I tend to prefer this approach, since the songs are a bit more memorable. Blazing (oops!) (PO Box 17742, Covington, KY 41017, www.sound-pollution.com)

PYRAMID SCHEME – What Will We Do Next? (Art Fraud, 7" EP)

Thrash thrash thrash—some snare-slammin' at the higher speed which isn't that appealing, but the band's rawness and brevity have something. I have to take exception to "If Could Get Rid Of One Thing It Would Probably Be The Sun," since it's been raining way too much in the weeks before I wrote this review. At the more moderate pace, it works best. (Brian Paull, 1749 Broadway Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15216, www.pyramidscheme.org)

SECOND OPINION – Youth Revolt (625/Tankcrimes, CD)

Some of these songs came out on a 625 7" a while back, and this is an expanded version with demo and live tracks. Aggressive youth crew and adding some old school and double-speed thrash parts. Hell, they *have* a song called "Thrash." No bullshit—expressed succinctly musically and lyrically. (www.625thrash.com or PO Box 3495, Oakland, CA 94609, www.tankscrimes.com)

SLEEPER CELL – s/t (Partners In Crime, LP)

So let's see—I've had MP3 files of this album for a little over a year at this point and it's finally out. Unfortunately, it's been lights out for Sleeper Cell for a bit. They're (more or less) fucking dead and the members have moved on to other bands—Social Circkle, Conversions, and Poison Control, to name three, and none of them sound like Sleeper Cell. Getting to the album, it's a powerful effort. Maintaining the shredding tandem of Scandinavian hardcore and US scorch and also advancing it without losing focus. Spencer's vocals are hoarse and intense and the production full-on and powerful. Lyrics express plenty of cynicism about the post 9/11 security and police state—one of the songs was inspired with Spencer's own run-in with the law over a bullet belt he was wearing—as well as the war on terror and a more personal take on the day-to-day drudgery of the work world. If this is the end—and it looks as though it is—to use a bad cliché, they go out with a bang. (PO Box 11787, Portland, OR 97211)

TRAGEDY – Nerve Damage (Tragedy, CD)

Nah, I didn't get the LP—Tragedy was out of it pretty early into their tour, but I still wanted to hear the new album. Besides, the digipak is a decent enough package, and I'm not as virulently anti-CD as some. More Tragi-core—I think that's come into hardcore lexicon; if not, I'm taking credit and if it seems cheesy, I apologize. Doomy, heavy hardcore with low-timbre howlings from Todd and Billy. A tandem of Scandinavian and Japanese hardcore, with the full-on piledrive of the former and melodic/metallic elements of the latter. For all the talk about this band being "epic," the song lengths are kept to three minutes or less. The untitled instrumental has the fury accompanied by piano (kind of pretentious, to be honest) and acoustic guitar shows up at the beginning of "Under The Radar." The songs, though, mainly stick to a quick tempo and "Rabid Panic" is a full-on speed blitz. Powerful in a both a musical and lyrical sense. (no address listed; try www.ebullition.com)

UPSTAB – W/Report (Way Back When/Even Worse, 7" EP)

This may be my favorite release from the Clevo ragers Upstab. Speed, power, and burn as you'd expect with any band that includes an Erba—in this case, it's Chris spitting out the vocals and Tony was in the band for a bit, as well. Angry, anti-authoritarian—"Albinos" is about the fucked-up nature of war and patriotism and that may be trite but, you know what? Some things were meant to be screamed about and I don't give a fuck if it's played out to some. This sound is FAR from played out. (www.waybackwhenrecords or www.geocities.com/evenworserrecords)

DVD REVIEW:

JERICHO'S ECHO: Punk Rock In The Holy Land

As you probably figured out, this is a documentary about punk and hardcore bands in Israel. Filmmaker Liz Nord has done an excellent job not only covering the bands and the scene but also tying it into the political/social situation in Israel. To the members of Useless ID, the pop/punk band that is prominently featured in the film, "punk rock is freedom." The punk scene is relatively small and there are a range of opinions—some bands on the left, a few on the right, some taking a more moderate view, and some of them apolitical. The most blatantly right-wing band is Retribution, who believe strongly in defending Israel. Their music is tough-guy mosh-core, which I suppose fits into their worldview. Many of the bands here follow the lead of Useless ID, playing the melodic West Coast Fat Wreck Chords sound. The film doesn't shy away from the conflicts that create tension in the country. A member of one of the bands, Ha Pussy shel Lussy, was blown up by a suicide bomber. There was a similar fate for a friend of one of the other bands and they say it was chilling to see her dancing in a video of one of their shows three days before she was killed. The occupied territories, militarization, and tensions between the strongly religious and more secular elements of society are explored and provide an often-grim backdrop to the musical happenings. Young adults are required to serve in the military and that also provides conflicting feelings—some try to get out, some put in their time during the week and then turn to the comfort of the punk scene on the weekends. All of this is their reality, and punk is presented as a way for these young people to cope with it, whether it's expressing a viewpoint or blowing off steam.

The documentary was filmed in 2003 and the extra material is a "where are they now" segment from 2005. There's talk about how differing punk factions tend to get along better and realize that they're all a minority and should stick together. There's been a maturation process with some of the people—Retribution, for instance, while sticking to their vehemently pro-Israeli point of view, also now see some shades of gray.

The only thing that seems to be missing is the inclusion of some of the more radical and aggressive underground elements—I'm thinking in particular of Dir Yassin. It would have been interesting to get their take on the punk scene and the political environment if they'd been available. Otherwise, this is a very well made film. (www.jerichosecho.com)

PHOTOCARD
Name of Holder: Mr.Mrs.Miss.Ms.
Layla Gibbon
Valid for use only by person shown with a ticket bearing the same number
BJO 5499

Well, here is my first non guest column for *MRR*. I guess should write about my highly mystical entry into the mysterious world that is punk rock, but uh, I kind of don't feel like it? It seems like it's the hazing ritual for all new columnists here. I understand the purpose of it, as some kind of introduction to a random new columnist's weird quirks and drunken teenage car park puke-it-up-stories, but instead I have decided to write about random things I like about living in San Francisco. Or maybe just random things I like. What about if I just insert a sarcastic comment about the life changing effect Jimmy Pursey had on my life? That would probably be enough, right? Or maybe something about walking along the Brighton seafront with Jon from Huggy Bear in the late '90s, of course talking about Jimmy Pursey modeling for Comme Des Garcons, that fashion label. The main thing I am going to use this column for—apart from increasing my street-team-style attempts at getting Golnar an all girl Scandi-beat army (If you want to sign up, are female, *and* like Scandinavian hardcore, particularly the sounds that emanate from Finland, contact me or Floyd ASAP)—is to outline the rad and inspiring things that are, uh, rad and that inspire me. An extended and endless top ten with epic descriptions of the pain and suffering that elevated said things to the "rad and inspiring" heights that they have reached. How am I writing a column about writing a column? So lame. I totally feel like a kid with a paper due though. AT ANY RATE.

One of my favorite musical genres is teenage bedroom/basement music. I interviewed Craig from God is My Co-Pilot many years ago, and he was talking about how as a kid in the '70s he had first heard about punk via the written word, that is, he read about it before he actually heard any music. When he finally heard the Sex Pistols he was super disappointed because he was expecting something that would shatter music forever, and it was basically just destroyed '50s rock 'n' roll... I guess nowadays in the land of post ironic dudes in flares and douchebag '70s jock rock mustaches who just wanna play bar-rawk'n'roll *maaaan*, the idea of destroying rock 'n' roll is very pleasing to me, and I kind of wish the Sex Pistols had been more successful in that regard. I am super sick of gross gentlemen who resemble the jock assholes in *Dazed and Confused* populating the streets of my town in perpetuity; why do retro hipster people have to dress like the jock jerk-offs and secretary bitches of the past? So weird... But anyway, my point was that I like the music that people made in the '70s and early '80s where when you listen to it you get this feeling that they were blown away by the notion of punk, just the idea of total freedom from the rock 'n' roll canon. Obviously a lot of the initial fire and idea of punk came from the re-discovery of the trashed out sounds of '60s garage bands, so most of the initial wave had that as their aesthetic... hence the aforementioned destroyed rock 'n' roll feel. But what I love is the totally insane almost terrifying music, made by the people who would never have played music if the music scene had continued to be dominated by mustached arsewipes in tight pants who wailed their cocaine demons out on their $10,000 guitars or made bass-face as they thumped out another 50 year long slap bass solo. Punk was for the people, to paraphrase Patti Smith, the girls and the geeks, the queers and the maladjusted, true outsider music. I like also listening to bands that think they are making "normal" rock 'n' roll but are actually clearly operating using quite different brain chemistry and are quite unable to do "normal" anything at least musically. Below I have detailed a few of my jams. I am not a masterful record nerd, and I am sure I have some of the details wrong in regards to some of these records and bands, but I wanted to write about them anyway in my bogus introduction column...because fuck record nerds. Total shitsystem. Right now and always I am consumed by teenage bedroom/basement music. Music that is cohesive in its totality, that creates new worlds and that's exclusive and inclusive too somehow. Like this band made these sounds and you could never do it the way they did but you could definitely do something. And you should.

UNIT 3 was a synth-punk band from LA, featuring the band members' eight-year old daughter Venus on vocals—the UNIT 3 + VENUS 7" *Beer* is perhaps one of creepiest/most awesome 7"s ever. The music kind of reminds me of the SCREAMERS, old synths played to death, with an eight-year old girl intonating over and over "Beer isn't good for you, I don't like beer" on the A side and, "Blue is my color..." on the B side, and somehow making it sound like she's singing about your future doom. It's way more disturbing that anything SLAYER or any of those Norwegian prison death bands combined have put to tape. Their "brother" band was MAD SOCIETY, which featured an eleven-year old boy on vocals—they also have an amazing 7" you should seek out. It's more straight-ahead SoCal punk, but the vocals are fucking terrifying and insane, almost too much to take but fucking great. I first met shitworker Shane White because he overheard me talking about UNIT 3 + VENUS and couldn't believe I had heard of them, he used to go see them all the time apparently... I think they "happened" after the initial LA punk explosion, maybe more in the hardcore bonehead era? Which I think is cool because the way all the art punk people from that first generation of LA punks talk about that later era is as if it was just a million Shawn Sterns beating the shit out of each other, and the idea that this crazy eight-year old girl fronted music existed in tandem with TSOL is fuckin rad.

I can remember the first time I heard the VOID side of the FAITH/VOID split clearly, thinking that it was pretty much the best record ever at the same time as trying to figure out how they sounded so amazing whilst falling apart. I think that is pretty much my favorite kind of hardcore, not many can do it, probably only the NEOS 7"s come close... What is it that separates VOID from all the shitty bands that can't play that have made unlistenable records? I mean Bubba Dupree is pretty much the best name ever in general, and the first two and last two songs on that split are just untouchable. Perfect suburban basement music, rage and frustration that makes no sense and is ridiculous and awesome at the same time. If you know about any other bands in this genre that are not bogus seriously send me tapes! My friend Brett made me a tape of the two RUTTO 7"s, an old Finnish lady-fronted punk band who kind of remind me of VOID in some of the above mentioned ways. He called them the Finnish FRUMPIES, I guess because of the screamed out girl vocals, but I think they are more hardcore sounding, the music collapses in on itself, the singer is furious and doesn't care at the same time. I would totally skate to this.

What else? Well obviously there's the RAINCOATS the ultimate secret bedroom band, I am sure you have at least heard the first LP?? Total instinctive music that sounds like it had to exist or the band members would surely have expired. Hopefully there will be a feature on the RAINCOATS/Rough Trade scene in these pages in the next few months. My mum met Gina Birch at a memorial show for our friend Andy who was killed in a bike accident, she remembered her because my teenage band played the first RAINCOATS reunion show. At any rate the point of that anecdote is that the RAINCOATS are all still best friends, (except for Palmolive who is a crazy Christian) how rad is that? I mean the music sounds like it was made by a secret society of girls, and to know that over twenty years later that same secret society still totally hang out together? That makes me psyched to grow old and stay punk. Obviously the SLITS *Peel Session* and demo totally fall in this category too, I am kind of ambiguous about their reunion, who knows why? They have the daughter of one of the singers from RIP RIG & PANIC doing backups, which is kind of cool... That era of music always makes me nostalgic for my childhood, the early '80s in West London were an amazing time to be alive. Or maybe just shorten that to "growing up in West London was the best." Chasing reggae soundsystems with my friends, skating at all the random '70s bowls, discovering the Rough Trade record shop, the random mix of British working class and Jamaican and Portuguese culture... Before Maggie Thatcher wiped out the dole and attempted to wipe out working class culture entirely and make England a land of upwardly mobile opportunists and speedily sinking desperation on the faces of those who were unable to "pull themselves up by their bootstraps" or whatever...

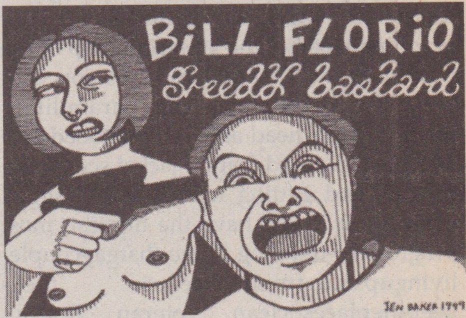
I kind of get the same sense living in San Francisco, where there are weird old bohemian types who have lived in the same apartment for like 40 years surrounded by an archeology project in the works of books and records... Except I feel like that culture is getting wiped out by straight up free market yuppie doom merchants. I read this rad interview with PINK SECTION, an old SF punk band from the late '70s that you should totally check out if you like lady-fronted punk, where the singer talked about living in an apartment in the North Beach and only having to work one day a month. Can you even imagine?

I guess I meant to write about all the music that has shaped me as a human, and am not sure if I have done that successfully here. I mean, I missed HUGGY BEAR who totally changed my life, Plus there's the English DIY culture side of teenage bedroom music, bands like the DESPERATE BICYCLES and the HOMOSEXUALS that you can check out on those *Messthetics* comps that Hyped 2Death puts out.

Anyway here is an eternal/right now only top ten of falling apart but world creating music:
1. KRAUT – "Matinee" 2. KIKEIJI – "Plastics Love" 3. HUGGY BEAR – *Rubbing thee Impossible to Burst* 7" 4. VOID/FAITH split 5. FRUMPIES – all 7"s 6. RAINCOATS first LP 7. BEDBOYS – *L'Indifferenza Uccide* 7" 8. RUTTO – 7"s 9. RAPPRESAGLIA – "Attack" 10. MIKA MIKO – demo tape.

Other things I am into right now include: 1. underground cave formations, 2. walking thru Golden Gate Park in the fog to the windiest, shittiest, but raddest beach, like walking onto the set of a '70s dinosaur sci-fi movie 3. pizza, 4. Anne Briggs 5. Productive Summer '06 6. the Townes Van Zandt documentary *Be Here to Love Me* 7.W.A.S.T.E.D (We All Skate Til Everyone Dies=skate summer '06!) 8. Irma Thomas 9. the *Eccentric Soul* comp 10. Dr Alimantado *Best Dressed Chicken In Town* LP

Write me here: layla.gibbon@gmail.com or c/o the MRR mailing address.



A friend of mine was telling me that there are certain people who go to shows dressed like pirates. She said they wear big nautical hats and try to talk like 18th century seafarers. This made me think of this guy Whitey who was in a band called Stiffs Inc. in NYC. I mean there's one thing with wearing vintage clothing and all, but this guy wears spats and gets himself all done up like he's of the Victorian Age (he'll exclaim his fondness for headache powders and cocoa elixirs while riding the L train to work in the morning, listening to Morbid Angel on his iPod, it's a strange thing, but let's get back to the conversation). So, I thought about it, this pirate thing, and said, "Yeah, that sorta goes over that line of subculture into the Renaissance Fair/Civil War reenactment territory," and she agreed.

But then I got to thinking about it some more. A couple of summers ago, a far more annoying individual decided to start talking to me about the Republican National Convention protests in New York. I let him go on about how he was twist-tied in a hallway for eight hours. Then I replied, something like, "Well, it sounds like you got exactly what you came there for, to be able to brag to everyone about how cool you are." Needless to say, this individual wasn't very bright and didn't really have the means to have a comeback to that, other than to make like I was a Republican or attacking him or something. As someone who's not under any political party affiliation, and who tries to think of things in a logical way—if someone dressed like a pirate told you to buy the new EVEN AND THE BLACKOUTS record, you'd probably say to yourself, "Wow, this guy really is a moron."

That brings me back to the people protesting. Now, to you and me, a guy or a girl with 30 facial piercings and a cut-up t-shirt with a profane word on it is barely noticeable. But the question is: Someone voicing political views to the "general public" looking like someone who'd steal their car—is this any different than someone dressed like Stonewall Jackson telling you to listen to NONE MORE BLACK? If your grandma watches the 30-second clip of the protest on the TV news and sees you with your dumb painter's cap/paramilitary thing on your head and your tattooed face and your studded leather jacket screaming at cops and getting maced and dragged away, even if you have the hippest, most progressive-thinking, Ilove thatgaycouplelivingupstairsfrommebecause theykeeptheplacesoclean veteran beatnik grandma, she's still gonna think, "Look at those losers fucking everything up for everyone on TV." Of course if your grandma isn't all that, and she's like most of the grandmas the over half of us who have grandmas have, they think, "Look at those scumbags, this is the exact reason I'm voting for George Bush, to clean up lazy-ass scum like that."

Now, before you pooh pooh what I just said, I have nothing against free expression. I have nothing against free speech. I have nothing against nailing, branding, amputating, scarring, or putting jewel-encrusted knitting needles up your anus. I happen to be writing this column in my underwear, but I'm not planning on being on TV while I do it. If I were, I think I'd put a suit on. I'm saying, if I were going to present myself on television as someone with an opinion and the forum isn't going to be WWE Smackdown. Do I wear a suit any other day?

Yeah, when it's serious. I bought a suit to wear to funerals. Do I really need to express myself in some fashion sense at a funeral? No. Why? Because I'm showing up to show a little respect. Not wearing proper attire means I have no respect for the person's family or their death. Do I personally think it's a big deal to show up to a funeral in shorts? No, personally I really don't care; I think it's the thought that counts. But when the thought will be expressed in a public manner, and I'm there to show I am respectful, as well as wanting to be respected for the honorable gesture of showing my face at a friend's funeral, I'm going to put on a fucking suit and not think about it. There's no one there to impress; there's nothing cool about someone dying; it is a serious matter and I'm going to approach it in a mature and serious manner.

So, let's go back to the Republican National Convention protest. A lot of people showed up not only dressed like bums, but shouting in policemen's faces. Many came prepared to be maced, wearing things around their heads. Now, I know 99 percent of the protestors planned to go about things in the most nonviolent way, but then there are the folks, some of whom I saw personally, who mixed this up with a whole lot of drinking. To them, whether or not they really believe in the cause, they're going because it's a social event for them.

Back to the funeral home. Hey, there's a security guard; yes, he does have means to harm me. Now, if I show up to a funeral—say it's the funeral of a well-known lawyer, a prosecutor even—that security guard may have a slightly heightened sense of anxiety. If I show up wearing a bandana around my face like Billy the Kid and I'm drinking Gatorade spiked with Vodka, perhaps that security guard will ask me to leave. If I start shouting, perhaps he will mace me or cattle prod me and call the police.

When I see photos of the civil rights marches in the Fifties, I see a lot of people looking like they are on their way to church, and to some extent sounding like they're on their way to church. It all seems quiet and orderly, and I don't know what my grandma thought about them then, but I know that now she thinks somewhere along the lines of, "Those people fought for their rights and the rights of others and I'm very proud of them and proud to live in a country where things can be changed by those who go out in a serious manner and change them."

So, if you're not convinced…

My good friend Artie was also at the RNC protests. He wasn't protesting, though—he had to work at a stupid Broadway play selling t-shirts to special showings for conventioneers. So he's all dressed up for work, walking down the street alongside cops in riot gear and cavalries and loud bike messenger protesters and basically a big shouting match. He spots a large pile of police gear sitting on a corner. He bends down, picks up a riot helmet, walks a block into a store, asks for a shopping bag, places helmet in shopping bag, sets off to work—no one notices.

Perhaps treating something as important and serious as a protest in an important and serious manner instead of as some sort of demented party will cause things to actually change. Until it does, I personally don't want to be associated with the guy bragging about his battle scars.

bill@candids.com

FELIX HAVOC
FIN DE SIECLE ANGST

I've written a lot in this space about the logistics of touring, releasing, and distributing records. This month I want to talk about the continued rise in oil and gas prices and how it affects DIY hardcore.

There is a growing awareness that humans have struck a Faustian bargain with our planet regarding fossil fuels. Global warming, environmental destruction, and resource depletion are some of the negative effects of our two-hundred-year experiment with industrialization. Some would also argue that cancer, depression, and modern neurosis and anomie are other negative affects of the same process. Global warming and fossil fuel depletion (commonly referred to as "peak oil") have finally entered or re-entered the public consciousness on the fringes of the mainstream media. A quick trip to a well stocked bookstore will reveal a shelf of books on the subject of fossil fuel depletion, such as *The Party's Over, The Long Emergency, Powerdown, High Noon for Natural Gas, Out of Gas, The End of Oil,* and so on.

Finally, thousands of people are waking up to the fact that oil and other fossil fuels are finite resources, and human civilization has been burning through them far faster than most people realize. The fundamentals of our civilization, and especially of American industrial society, are based entirely on fossil fuels. The design of our cities, our transit systems, our industrial and service-based economy, infrastructure, and food production all rely heavily on massive inputs of cheap fossil fuels. But don't take my word for it—go to a bookstore or library and check out some of the books mentioned above. Do some research, and you will come to many sobering conclusions about the future of our world.

As I write this, oil costs about 70 dollars a barrel—a price unthinkable just a few years ago. I have little doubt that in the near future it will be at 150 dollars a barrel or more. The bottom line here is that the age of cheap oil is coming to an end. While we may see some short-term fluctuations in price over the next few years, I think we've reached the point where most of the easy-to-get oil has been used up, and production has or is peaking. From now on all the oil that remains will be harder and more expensive to extract, and prices will continue to rise. Gas is already seven dollars a gallon in many European countries and will probably hit five dollars a gallon in the US sooner than we think. The recent rise in oil prices has sent a shock wave through the economy. A shock wave that I think we are only beginning to feel.

The rise in oil and natural gas prices is going to have a ripple effect throughout the world economy. Prices for goods, personal transportation, and home heating will go up, but wages and incomes most likely will not. Some economists are already talking about a return to 1970's style stagflation—with zero economic growth coupled with rising prices. These coming hard economic times will probably spell the beginning of the end for the long period of growth and prosperity that the world economy has been experienced (or at least that the rich and big business have been experiencing, as little of the growth has trickled down to the working class).

What does this have to do with hardcore? Well, since we all share the planet, things like global warming and peak oil affect us all, whether or not we listen to vegan hardline or Icelandic D-beat. But more immediately, it means that the cost to tour and to release and distribute records will increase dramatically. As I wrote above, our whole society depends on cheap oil. And the DIY hardcore scene, for all its laudable striving for independence, is still 100 percent dependent on cheap fossil fuels to power vans and amplifiers and make and ship records and CDs.

I wanted to write this column a few months ago, but I waited until after the Victims' US tour to see if the DIY hardcore scene had made much progress in the way of adapting to the realities of three-dollar-a-gallon gas. Although there is a general awareness that high gas prices are cutting into touring, there has been little adjustment made to the reality, beyond a certain fatalism.

I set out a few years ago to redress what I then perceived as an imbalance in the world of DIY touring. When I went to Europe in 1999 with Code 13, I saw that dozens of US bands were touring Europe on a regular basis, including many bands that never even toured in the US. My involvement with bands like DS-13 and Vitamin X prompted me to establish a DIY touring infrastructure that I have continued to improve on (with the help of course of countless other bookers, bands, and shitworkers). I was inspired primarily by Neil Robinson's pioneering tours for overseas bands in the 90's. And in the past few years, many others have arrived at the same point I'm at with bringing over overseas bands to tour the US. However, since the DS-13 tour in 2001, one glaring point is clear: *the price of gas has doubled and the price of gigs is exactly the same*. In fact the price of gigs hasn't changed since I was going to see bands like Black Flag, Void, and Reagan Youth in the early 1980s. Average door price is still about six dollars. However, fuel expense is over twice what it was five years ago, and airfare will predictably rise to cover the rising costs of fuel as well.

Where is the difference made up? Well, fewer and fewer bands these days expect to cover their costs or break even. While this might be an option for some bands, it makes a troubling precedent. If all bands are expected to lose money touring, only financially well off bands will be able to tour. I already feel like the innate egalitarianism of the DIY hardcore scene is not ruthless enough in weeding out hacks and advancing merit, but this will surely tip the scales further in the wrong direction. Good bands without money will stay home and hacks with trust funds will be able to tour indefinitely.

The second area where the difference is made up is of course in "merch." I have been critical over the years of the increasing commercialization of hardcore. True, I am one of the agents of that commercialization, because I can no longer conceive of paying for airfare, van rental, and gas without some arsenal of limited edition records, t-shirts, pins, and posters to sell at gigs. In some parts of the hardcore scene, the merch almost seems to be a bigger focus than the music. For instance, many speculate that Bane has sold more hooded sweatshirts than records. However, the focus on merch and consumerism is quite a departure from the lean and aggressive days of hardcore past, where the focus was just on the music, since there was no "market" for merch or anything more than small pressings of seven-inches. And if commercialism is all hardcore is about, then why bother to have an underground hardcore scene at all?

Another factor that I've brought up before, in addition to the rise in commercialism, is the specter of corporate or major label sponsorship. That is to say, with major labels taking a larger interest in the underground, it might be plausible for such labels to subsidize tours for bands in their orbit. The idea of a label buying a van or paying for gas for bands to tour in an era when other bands are cutting back on touring seems fairly plausible.

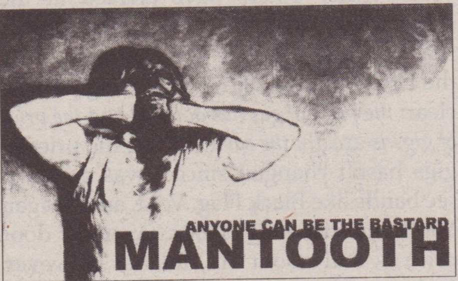
One of the most troubling observations I've made that is rarely touched on in the punk scene is the Pabst Blue Ribbon marketing campaign. I urge readers to check out some online articles about this campaign and its "innovative" techniques. In short, some young ad execs at PBR decided to break from the traditional strategies of sport sponsorship, billboards, etc. and just give away PBR "merch" at shows and give hip bars free or super cheap PBR to sell at gigs. In short order, PBR has become the beer of choice in the punk, rockabilly, and bike messenger subcultures. For a fraction of the cost of a few seconds of TV air time on Monday Night Football, Pabst has seen its sales rise 10 percent a year for several years straight. The PBR "buzz" marketing campaign is itself the latest buzz in marketing schools. I think this is another dangerous precedent being set. Pabst is currently marketing itself as a "sponsor of live and local music." It's a pretty short jump from this sort of thing to corporations sponsoring bands to tour even in the underground. A few thousand dollars is nothing in an ad campaign, but it's gas money for a whole tour and in return the band just has to wear Pabst shirts on stage or a similar arrangement. I think this is the kind of thing we should all be alert for the future.

I would like to suggest some possible solutions to rising costs of gas on touring bands. One of the most obvious solutions is to get a more fuel efficient or alternate fuel vehicle. RAMBO and several other US bands have diesel vans converted to run on vegetable oil. And the biodiesel revolution is sweeping the country (more on this in a future column). In Japan, where gas and car ownership have been expensive forever, most clubs have a full backline of high quality set up for the bands to use. Bands show up by train or car with only guitars and use the club's backline. In Europe it's quite common for all the bands at a gig to share a backline as well. Europeans have commented on how inefficient it seems for four different bands to pull up to a gig and load in and unload four complete back lines, when only one would do. Granted, this would depend on a larger degree of cooperation and coordination than currently is in place in the DIY hardcore scene, but given the European and Japanese examples, it's not impossible. I think rising gas prices will also foster more regional scenes. Probably the densely populated east coast will fare the best as far as having many bands able to do short tours on a budget. Places like Denver, Miami, or Winnipeg that are already off the touring circuit will probably be even further from it. The end result might be a rise in more local/regional bands. This could have some very positive benefits—the first wave of hardcore was so great for it's diversity and regional variations.

Another factor that troubles me the most is that record costs will continue to rise. The plastic resins that vinyl records are made of are of course fossil-fuel-based. And since most of us live at some distance from a pressing plant, shipping costs will continue to increase. Likewise, postage costs will no doubt be increased repeatedly to cover rising fuel costs in the coming years. There seems to be big resistance to paying much higher prices for records, as prices have gone up a lot just in the past few years. While I think it's sometimes easier to rationalize a higher record price than a higher door price at a gig, I am concerned that rises in price will just mean fewer people bothering to buy records at all. Which brings me to the digital music craze. I must admit that I've warmed up to digital music quite a bit over the past few years. While I am 100 percent a vinyl record collector, I can see the efficacy of trading digital music files. From an environmental perspective, I think the world would be vastly better off going straight to digital format, without most of the CD and vinyl in circulation today. That said, hardcore belongs on seven-inch vinyl, the most crucial format.

I think the world economy is in for some tough times, and industrialized society as we know it faces critical challenges in the very near future regarding both fossil fuels and global warming. So far, those in power have shown very little interest in addressing these issues. I think it behooves anyone who has made it through this column to read up on these issues and think a little more about both the impact of our "scene" on these factors and their impact on our scene.

It dawned on me as I typed this that I've been an MRR columnist now for over 100 issues. I still remember Tim Yo calling me up and inviting me to write for MRR. At the time I was quite critical of MRR for not covering enough thrash and crust and focusing too much on pop punk and garage rock. MRR was the establishment and I was still something of a young upstart at the time. I guess Tim figured I had a perspective that would add a new or different point of view to the magazine. Whether or not he made the right choice—you be the judge— I'm still stoked to be here.


ANYONE CAN BE THE BASTARD
MANTOOTH

It just so happens that this column marks my two-year anniversary writing for *MRR*. It also just so happens that my birthday is in a few days. And as my birthday to myself, I am giving myself the gift that keeps on giving: laziness. Most writers with at least an ounce of self-respect would shirk at the suggestion of a "retrospective" piece to commemorate such a landmark achievement. But I don't necessarily consider myself a writer as much as I do a sort of…how you say…phony. So, here are a few of my favorite moments from my column's history and a little background as to what I what I was thinking.

Guest Column, June 2004:
Excerpt: *All Anarchist fantasy is inherently transcendental. Don't know what transcendentalism is? Excellent! Try as hard as you can not to learn about this, or really anything to do with literature or language. Grammar? Fuck it! Spelling? Why confine yourselves to those tired old combinations of consonants and vowels? Tell Pat Sajak to take a fucking hike! Make up your own spelling and grammar! Hell, the people pretending to read this tripe won't know the difference. Do you think metaphorize is a real word? Or flabbergastation? Exactly. It's that* easy! *So don't worry about all that shit snooty college professors or Webster's Dictionary will tell you about writing. Focus more on metaphorizing the act of eating garbage or stealing from libraries!*

What I was thinking: CrimethInc is fucking rubbish, but remains one of the most entertaining columns *MRR* has to offer. I love finding their "literature" that reads like fantasy novels written on binders by high school students who got real high in the parking lot before school.

Perhaps one of my favorite CrimethInc moments was when I read some guy describe two hornets "fucking." Sorry, Little Billy Anarchy, but most likely you saw two worker bees from different hives trying to kill each other. But maybe I haven't gone deep enough into the sticky crevices of the "metaphor."

Untitled, August 2004
Excerpt: *RIP Gilbert Gottfried*

What I was thinking: I actually got a lot of emails from concerned readers about this. Actually, I'm not sure if they qualify as "readers" since they've obviously not evolved the frontal lobes necessary to A) pick up a newspaper and not see the grave of Gilbert Gottfried, and/or B) not give a shit about Gilbert Gottfried being dead or alive.

"Dear Mr. President," March 2005
Excerpt: *And this is why, on January 20th, 2005, in a fit of patriotic rage, with a yellow ribbon tied firmly around the base of my penis, supporting our troops, my unfortunate canine ("The Great Communicator"), found himself drenched in grade A, built Ford tough, American semen.*

What I was thinking: I seriously do not remember writing this column. I sincerely apologize to anyone who read this fucking thing.

"Buffalo Ham," June 2005
Excerpt: *They were all dressed up like Juggalos and yelling about how they were from Detroit and played 4-Square at Michigan Fest "back in the day." They played for about 40 minutes, but ended "early" because "these imbeciles don't know what true art is." I asked them what "true art" was and Preihs lifted up his shirt revealing a giant portrait of Ty Cobb on his back.*

What I was thinking: Absolute contempt for Threatener. Actually, these guys are all really nice. Except for that Michael "Preihs" guy. He's actually an angel sent to earth to show me the error of my ways. His skin is as soft as the mornin' dew and his breath always smells of peppermint and lilies.

I actually wrote this column about five times as something else before I fell back on the trusted stand-by of "slander."

Oh, and "the singer of Threatener" has a name: Roderick. I could have just looked in one of the records to remind myself, but

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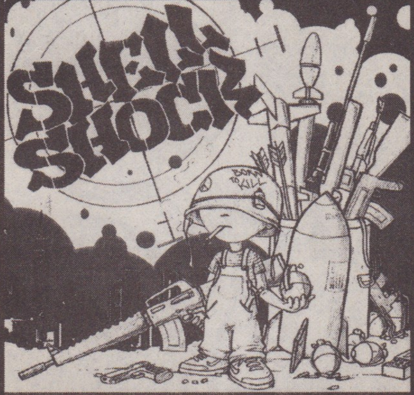

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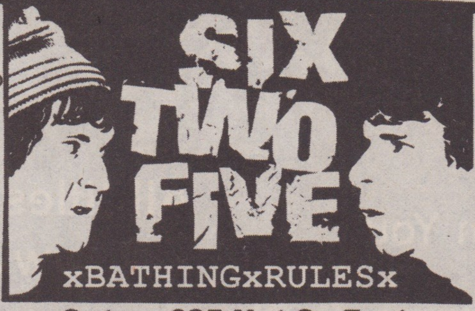

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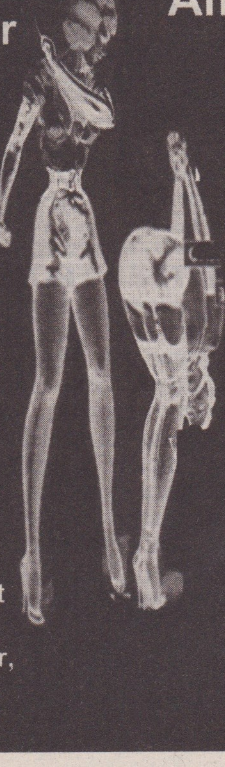

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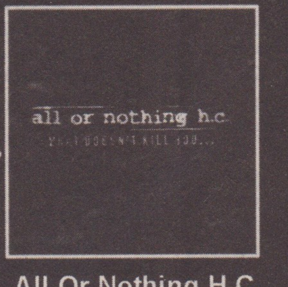
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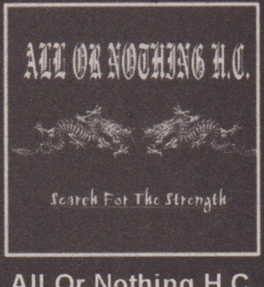
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I am a fucking idiot.

"Sticks'n'Dicks," August 2006
Excerpt: *If you are male, I have a feeling I don't need to really explain what I mean by "woods porn." Almost every time I bring up the subject, any and every female in the vicinity scrunches up their eyebrows in confusion at the ensuing conversation about our "first time" finding it. It doesn't matter if you live in a city; woods porn can be found under any manner of shrubbery or overgrowth. The point of woods porn is that it is found outside the realm of domestication; it is wild and untamed. Rarely, though, do I hear of girls finding porno in the woods. It's not unheard of, but certainly uncommon.*

What I was thinking: This is probably one of my favorite topics to talk about. I still haven't met one guy who hasn't found woods porn in some form or another. One of these days I'm going to sit down and type out all the anecdotes people sent me in response to this column. They're all awesome.

I was talking to my boss about the subject the other day and he reminded me of another important aspect of woods porn—"the tip-off." It's when one of your neighbors found some woods porn and makes the rounds to let all those who would appreciate such a find.

"Yo, dude, just callin' to let you know there are some sweet *Hustlers* down by the creek. I set them underneath that big tire."

"The one with graffiti all over it?"

"Yeah, that's the one. Oh, and watch out. There is a fucking gross-ass spread about pissing pages 6-8."

"Oh, damn. Thanks."

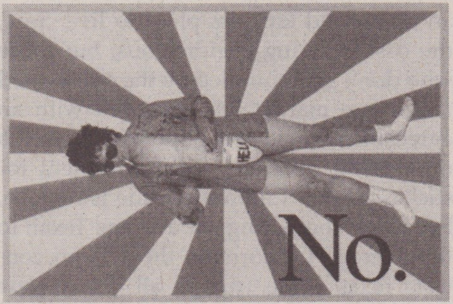
"Guitar Center," February 2006:
Excerpt: *Now, Lord knows I'm no musician. You'd think I would have put my "superior college education" to use by perhaps learning how to play an instrument and not duping wild animals into writing my column for me. Perhaps, then, you would be wrong (once again) for the second time this month. No, instead I have spent my time wallowing in the pits of musical instrument retail in search of the purest form of wankery known to man. And that form is* Guitar Center.

What I was thinking: I actually stole this idea from a friend of mine. But he never reads this magazine, so I got away scot-free! Sucker! I actually steal a lot of ideas and "jokes" from friends of mine. Like I said: Mantooth = Phony. If you are ever approached by an internationally distributed publication, the best way to circumnavigate your own lack of talent is to steal from those who *are* funny but are too stupid to copyright their various witticisms.

"Cadaveric Incubator of Endo Parasites," March 2006:
Excerpt: *I was pulled out of my cushy office job, posting on internet message boards all day long, to take up a thin metal spear in my hand, stab through dead rats, and toss them in a dumpster. For about three hours I climbed through the muck of a collapsing burrow with a spear full of dead rats like a pestilent shish kebab. If you ever find yourself in a situation like that, remember to puncture the things underneath the spine, because if you get them in the gut, you'll perform rat seppuku and their intestines will spill out everywhere. And you know what they've been eating for the past month, so your mind will never let you wash that texture of oily brown entrails off your hands no matter how many layers of latex gloves you wore.*

What I was thinking: My life is a goddamn mess. This trip down memory lane is fucking depressing.

Endnotes:
– email: gregory.mantooth@gmail.com



Detachment is a costly thing. So much in life, even when it's going well, can lead to a need to withdraw from the world. When you are a person who keeps busy just to stay busy, and you don't think about what it is that provides all this drive to produce, it is easy to get lost in little prescribed detachment schemes. It is easy to self-medicate, and there are about a billion ways to do so.

There are a lot of intelligent, productive people who self-medicate, and the world of "punk rock" as we know it is full of them. Alcohol, pills, speed, cocaine, coffee, weed, heroin, cigarettes... Though these experience various degrees of social acceptance and power of their respective effects, they all provide little mechanisms to cope with day-to-day life, whether it is going well or badly. They are as important as food to most people, and the ritual involved makes for a little ceremonial exchange of power—that of the individual to the substance. This is not a straight edge screed, nor is it particularly a cautionary tale, but it is a fact. It is smart for people to be conscious of what they are doing to their minds and bodies.

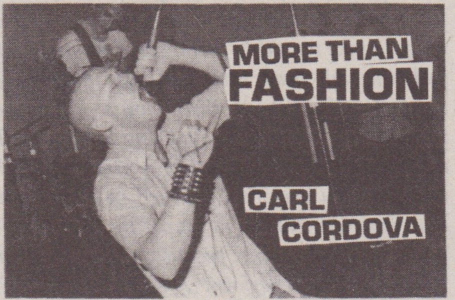
I am a person who medicates himself regularly, with a variety of substances, largely in order to keep any nascent dependence on any particular one in check. I am extremely meticulous with this, and carefully research the things I put in my body, their checks and balances, and how much is minimally required in order to produce a desired effect—excess doesn't really enter into it. The problem with this is that it keeps me addicted to the idea that my mental and physical state must be altered for any "progress" or "relaxation" to occur, and my goals are often attached to said "progress" or "relaxation." This has now coupled with the inevitable advance of time to produce a state in which I grow exhausted easily, and small tasks or recreational opportunities often seem relatively insurmountable without some twist of mindset courtesy of a drug of choice.

The limitation I set on the amounts and frequency of substance intake in my life has transformed from a disciplinary measure granting me freedom to experiment into a series of patterns that grow increasingly more predictable each day and threaten to destroy a lot of what I hold important. Of course, when they do, I will take something to deal with that as well. It's all starting to look like more and more of a trap, and when I look around me I realize that most people I know are in the jaws of the very same trap, including some of the very best, brightest, most productive, and even relatively healthiest (physically). Though underground scenes are commonly associated with drug excess and early death from such sure-shots as meth, cocaine, and heroin, the weird culture of functional junkie-dom (of various stripes) lurks everywhere, usually in a staid, quiet desperation unmarked by the drama of overdose, death, and incurable disease. It is complex, and the behavior runs deep. The psychologist treating a crazy junkie is just as likely to be a junkie him or herself, yet one with perhaps a slightly less bleak outlook despite their loneliness and detachment to be numbed with 10mg of Oxycontin in the evenings. It all comes down to the question of functioning, and whatever the hell that really means when we live such short lives.

There is a Polish movie from the early 1980s (during the communist era) called *The Illumination*. In it, a young and brilliant student physicist begins a promising career in academia. Along the way, he meets and falls in love with a young woman, they marry and have kids, and he drops out of the university for a time in order to build a life and work in a factory to support his child. During the movie, interviews and round-table discussions of real physicists are shown in which they describe the difficulty of achieving anything of worth in the hard sciences once one passes the mid-20s, and numerous examples are shown of famous minds who did their greatest work early in their careers—but it was all downhill from there. The young physicist in the movie reenters school again in his late-20s, and has a difficult time keeping up. His marriage suffers and his wife leaves him along with the child, while he continues to struggle with academics and burgeoning alcoholism. The final two scenes in the film are brief and to the point: we see the man (not so young now) listening to a doctor, who is telling him "This is bad. What you want prescribed from me is going to kill you eventually." In reply, the man says, "I don't care. Give me the speed." The very last scene shows him on the beach, reunited with his wife and child, who are both seemingly happy. He is alert and nervous, but smiling, and standing apart from his family. The movie indicates that he has accomplished his goals, but he stands there as a giant sweaty stress case with a wired grin.

So it has gone with how people function in the "social sphere" forever, since well before it was defined by Emile Durkheim in the 19th century; so it has gone with the fictional Soma in *Brave New World* and with the real Soma (ordered via Mexican online pharmacies) in the bedrooms of stressed-out office workers and housewives everywhere. So it goes with antidepressants, anti-psychotics, sleep medications, diet aids, cans of Sparks, ritalin, cheap beer, and various amounts of all the other old drug standards—mostly for the weekend only, of course. You can measure the doses along fully-researched scientific lines, you can conceal the desperation under the rubric of technological performance enhancement all you want, but the nature of the chemicals and the rituals remain the same from substance to substance. The dark edge stares at you out of the corner of your eye, rationalism ain't in it, and you can take that however you want. I'm just trying not to die, either inside or out, and getting the feeling that it may be easier to do so than I think.

–Johnny No Moniker, PO Box 3026, Oakland, CA 94609, johngeek@hotmail.com archive of old columns up at www.myspace.com/noarchive



Chaos in Tejas

Texas is a state of mind. Texas is an obsession. Above all, Texas is a nation in every sense of the word.

–John Steinbeck

If you've read any of my columns, then you already know that I am a proud Californian. Like most Californians, I take pride in this state's rich cultural history. Relative to the rest of the US, the Golden State is on the progressive forefront of a lot of social and environmental issues, and is an all around kick-ass place to live. Sure, the cost of living is ridiculous, but those who don't get crumpled by the overheated real estate market are rewarded with an agreeable climate and populace, as well a masochistic sense of accomplishment for sticking it out. California pride is no joke, but when comparing the average Texan to the average Californian, there is no contest. Texas pride trumps all. Even New Yorkers ain't got shit on Texans.

Despite making annual visits to Austin to see my mom, I never understood Texas nationalism until my last trip to attend the Chaos in Tejas festival. Three days of hanging out with awesome Texan punks and hardcores finally made me realize why even a California native like Steinbeck was in awe of the Texas mindset. From the punks to the cowboys, everyone I have come across there exudes a little bit of "Texans first, everything else second." I appreciate how everyone is so welcoming and open, particularly the people in Austin. Despite being so spread out and not especially scenic, I was surprised at how much the city reminded me of a Southwest version of San Francisco. That's not to say I am ready to pack my bags and move, but I am starting to understand what all the hubbub is about. Of course it didn't hurt that I was in Austin to attend a great festival entitled Chaos in Tejas.

Chaos in Tejas was held at a place called Emo's on 6th Street. 6th Street is similar to what I would imagine Bourbon Street is like in New Orleans, where it's club after club all the way down the street. When not crammed into bars, an interesting mixture of punks, UT college students, and locals can be seen teeming out onto the streets, ordering anything from burgers to veggie dogs from street food vendors. Emo's itself reminded me more of a rock compound than a venue. There were multiple stages of different sizes spread out alongside at least three bars. There was even a beer garden in the middle that connected everything. While all the bands of the festival played the large stage, once you paid you were allowed access to the smaller stages where other shows were happening simultaneously (this proved exceptionally useful to some of the members of FORWARD and WARHEAD who skipped out on TRAGEDY to watch THE BUSINESS on the small stage). This was quite possibly the best venue for an alcohol-friendly festival that I have ever attended. The sound system was great, stage-diving was allowed, and it wasn't that difficult to get a good view of the band. Before I get into a band play-by-play, I think it should be noted that the promoter, Timmy Hefner, did a bang up job on putting on the best festival since Chicago Fest 2000.

Texas' own IRON AGE had the misfortune of leading off the festival on Thurday. They had great energy, and Tarpy's vocals were spot-on, but I got the feeling that some of the crustier kids in the audience weren't feeling IRON AGE's brand of CRO MAGS-influenced hardcore. This was made apparent by this brilliant heckle exchange:

Frontman: "Doesn't look like chaos in Texas to me."

Random Crusty: "Yeah, looks more like gym class!"

Next up were THE PEDESTRIANS and ARMY OF JESUS, who both put on great sets. THE VICTIMS were raging, as was their surprisingly good sense of humor with the singer continuously asking if there were any Reptoids in the audience. After that came LIMP WRIST. Had it not been my first time seeing the DICKS, I would have said LIMP WRIST was the best band of the night. They destroyed the place. Despite living on separate coasts, they have not lost an ounce of energy. Martin is always a great frontman to watch, but he was on fire that night. The entire band was energetic, and Scott's guitar tone was perfect. Last up were the almighty DICKS, who were simply untouchable. Gary Floyd and company put on one hell of a show, playing all the hits (the exception being "I Hope You Get Drafted"), and everyone lost their marbles. After the show, FUCKED UP played an "all covers" set at a different location, which I literally slept on (fell asleep in the van while waiting for them to go on). My roommate reminded me that I missed one hell of a show that included covers of BLACK FLAG, the GERMS, as well as the entire A-side to INTEGRITY's *Humanity Is the Devil*. If anyone taped this, I will trade it for any other set I filmed at the fest.

Friday, May 19th, just got better. Unfortunately I missed BASTARD SONS OF APOCALYPSE and SIGNAL LOST, but was able to set my video camera up just in time for CRIMINAL DAMAGE. While a little sloppier than the record, this Portland-based punk band put on an impressive live show. After looking into the audience, it seemed their BLITZ-obsessed sound didn't sit well with some. I enjoyed every minute of it right up until they closed their set with the melodic anthem "Anesthesia." If you're a sucker for anything Oi, I would recommend checking out CRIMINAL DAMAGE. Unfortunately they share a member with TRAGEDY, so I doubt they will be touring anytime soon.

Soon after CRIMINAL DAMAGE came the MARKED MEN, who played an extremely tight set of snotty, hook-filled melodic punk. They had everything down from the buzzsaw Danelectros, to the quick drum playing, to the high-pitched vocals. Watching them bl'ast through an entire set without pausing helps explain why this band is so adored by garage and punk fans worldwide. CAREER SUICIDE was up next, and they fucking smoked through an entire set of blazing Boston-'83 hardcore. These Canadians got one of the best crowd responses of the festival. This was one of the few times during the fest I had wished I didn't have my video camera on me. Soon following came the crusty all-star line up of SEVERED HEAD OF STATE, who without a doubt stole the show. This was my first time seeing them, and having seen both TRAGEDY and WORLD BURNS TO DEATH, I was expecting something good. I was not, however, expecting SHOS to put on a better live show than both of them. Their sound is a perfect blend of moody Swedish hardcore mixed with old blown-out, distorted Japanese hardcore. They were absolutely devastating live. Standing next to the bassist the entire time, I was literally mesmerized by how good he was. He brought so much energy to their live performance while still being able to lay down some intensely sick bass lines. I am having a really hard time right now trying to think of a better punk bass player. SHOS vocalist Jack Control did his best Danzig posturing while bellowing out blistering lyrics about the apocalypse. I am really bummed that I decided to experiment and not bring my XLR mic connection on this day, because the sound during this band's set is almost unusable. SHOS were so good that they made the headliners, DEAD MOON, seem mind-numbingly tedious. Truth be told, I was genuinely excited to see DEAD MOON, as I had heard many good things. But besides playing entirely too long (at least a hour and a half), my ears had just been completely shattered by the previous band, and I was in no mood to sit through LED ZEPPLIN covers.

Austin-locals MANIKIN kicked off the last day with a fresh blend of post/art-punk not unlike WIRE or WARSAW. I enjoyed their set up until the trumpet. After that, the KRUMBUMS played an interesting blend of CASUALTIES-styled street punk with mood-driven TRAGEDY type breakdowns and intros. I stepped out to get some lunch and missed the BAYONETTES. But when I returned, Oakland favorites LOOK BACK AND LAUGH had just busted into their first song. They went apeshit, and the crowd soon followed suit. They were trailed by Canada's best export, FUCKED UP. As you would expect, they put on one of the best shows of the entire festival. Damian went shirtless, then briefly briefless, and then joked about doing a split EP on Victory Records, alluding to their recent signing to Jade Tree. He also kicked out a great rant about all the friends he's made since putting out a limited secret 7". When they kicked into "Generations," I was once again felt genuinely salty that I still had my camera on me.

Japanese legends WARHEAD took to the stage around 11:00 PM, and their set was anti-climatic to say the least. I heard someone mention that they were too bl'asted out on beer and drugs, but regardless their set was one of the few letdowns of the fest. Luckily their Japanese compadres FORWARD were there to pick up the pieces and put on one hell of powerful set. I was especially impressed with their last two songs, one of which was called "Revolution" (I think). TRAGEDY capped off the entire weekend with one of best shows I have ever seen them play. I didn't think they would ever be able to recreate their old Mission Records, first LP-era shows, but they laid waste to the Austin crowd that night. Ah, the power of the Adidas high-top…

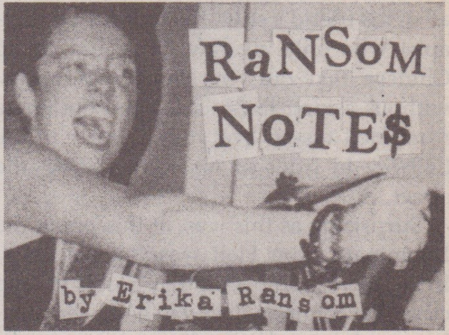
Aside from a few minor discrepancies, I had a really fun time. It wasn't until I typed this out that I realized that it is quite a rarity to walk away from a festival these days knowing that each band played one of the best sets you've ever seen them play. Plus, I got to see the DICKS. How fucking cool is that?! It was a great festival, at a great venue, in a great city, and dare I say it…in a great state. That's right, I said it. Texas is pretty fucking cool.

I've posted some live clips from the festival on the Internerd via YouTube. You can see them at: www.youtube.com/user/soulside. I will try to update it every so often until I have put up at least one song from every band I filmed.

You can contact me at ih8thekids@gmail.com. You could also send an original KAAOS/CADGERS split to 746 Baker Street, SF, CA 94115.

THE TOP TEN OF AUGUST

CRIMINAL DAMAGE *The Power of Fools* LP
CROW *Bloody Tear* LP
LIMP WRIST *Want Us Dead* EP
INFEST 10"
MARKED MEN *She Don't Know* EP
Austin, TX
IRON LUNG live
ZOUNDS *The Curse of Zounds* CD
S.O.B. *Leave Me Alone* EP
CEREMONY *Violence Violence* CD (great RED C cover!)



A Moment of Peace

June 5, Monday

I have escaped.

"Welcome. Bienvenidos." is painted on

the Mission Cultural Center across the street. The mural that covers the building, an abstract piece with earth tones, Aztec imagery, wolves, farmers, skeletons and figures in motion, fills my window view.

After a stressful week I can finally relax, and things feel peaceful.

As I write this, fog rolls in on the other side of Twin Peaks, but right here, a few blocks away, the sun is shining and palm trees strike green against blue sky. Mission Street is crowded with people and traffic, four lanes of cars, electric double length buses, taxis and the occasional biker. Two old women walk arm in arm in slow, deliberate steps down the sidewalk, carrying groceries in pink plastic bags.

I am celebrating being away from my last roommate, the Roommate from Hell. I was living in an apartment with four strangers, and didn't have a say in the matter of who moved in next. Not the best situation, but finding a place to live back in January when I moved to SF wasn't easy. I took what I could find, and what I could afford. Things in the apartment started off fine if a bit strange; I lived with a woman my age from Sweden who plays the harp and sings in a hip-hop band, a gay man in his 40s who practiced freelance therapy from the "office" of his room and kept telling me how bad the white flour in bagels was for me, and another ex-Bostonian in his 20s who always wore a baseball hat, worked at a bar on weekends, and worked for some company on-line from home during the week. We were all busy, got along, and things were fine.

Then, the Roommate from Hell moved in.

I knew things would start to go really badly the day he threw out everything in the living room.

I mean *everything*. Paintings, the large couch, the bookcase, tables, knick-knacks, statues—everything but the carpet. It was all of his friend's stuff, the unlicensed therapist who only ate raw food, and cheap Chinese take-out. In about two hours, without asking his friend, the Roommate from Hell tossed everything either in the hallway in front of my room, or on the street.

Surprising as this was, at this point, the Roommate from Hell wasn't even really living there, and his motive wasn't to help clean the common area. He had been staying on the couch for almost two months (never saying as much as a "thanks" to anyone for helping him out with a free place to stay or sharing our food) and had decided the living room didn't just give him enough space.

After clearing the living room completely out, down to the bare walls, he erected a tent made from silk sheets and microphone stands, and called it a day, and started singing. The kitchen and hallway and everywhere else in the apartment was filled with the refuse and discarded furniture of the living room, and the Roommate from Hell sang to himself in his new tent until dawn.

I'm not even making this up.

A month earlier, when I first met the Roommate from Hell, and he was only staying on the couch for a couple of weeks, his stories were amusing and harmless, as crazy people often have interesting things to say. For starters, he believed God and Satan had battled over his soul as a child, and angels had saved his life. He prayed to Jesus and meditated every day, and then started wearing a yarmulke and refusing to work or do his dishes on Saturday.

Roommate from Hell also claimed to be a famous singer of love songs in Mexico, although his singing to me sounded like off-key yodeling. Apparently, God had told him through a dream to "sing His praises" so he was required to sing in the early morning, in the afternoon, at 2 am, anytime he felt the spirit of the Lord, which seemed to be most of the fucking time he was home.

There were so many strange things about Roommate from Hell, and the more I learned about him, the more disturbed I was to be living in the same apartment with him.

For instance, although he was Native American and Mexican, he cooked only Indian food, and wore traditional Indian clothes, and sang classical Indian music, playing a sort of sitar. With all this cultural influence from India, one day I asked him, "So, have you visited India? You must be dying to go."

He replied, "No. Indians are dirty and filthy. Americans go there and get sick…"

Great. Not only was my new roommate a religious zealot, he was a total racist idiot. Not surprising.

Things only got worse from there, and being at "home" became more and more stressful. Two months went by, and I finally found a new place, and moved a couple of days ago. (A huge thanks to Brian and Golnar for helping me move, and carry my crap up three flights of steep stairs. You both rock!)

So, today I am thankful to be in a new apartment, sitting in my new room, living with the amazing and talented Tina, a new friend and co-worker. She plays drums in the all-female AC/DC tribute band, AC/Dshe, and also the metal rock phenomenon Night After Night. She also has a living room painted black, the walls covered with velvet paintings of tigers. The rent is cheap and the vibe is excellent. Hell fucking yeah.

Life is good.

***

And in this moment of a new beginning, leaving a stressful situation, living with a person I didn't trust, who was crazy and made me feel unsafe, I was reminded of my past, and how moving to Boston all those years ago was my first, my biggest escape. It was the most important move of my life.

Back then, when I was 18, it wasn't a psycho roommate that I was leaving behind, but rather a mentally ill mother, and a small town where I definitely didn't fit in.

I know, it's not nice to talk shit about your mother. She brought me into this world; she took care of me, and raised me and my sister as a single mom since I was eight. I love her. She's my mom, after all.

But, Mom had issues. Dad was an abusive husband, beating Mom up emotionally and mentally for a decade, and also prone to fits of rage. I don't know what he did to her physically, but as for myself, I remember vividly being beaten as a seven-year old for drawing in crayon on the wallpaper in my sister's room.

My sister was five, and had wanted to "decorate" her room. Who was I to argue?

He was the type of asshole who, after "spanking" my sister and I so hard we couldn't breathe from screaming, asked us, "Do you know what will happen if you draw on the walls again?"

There was a long pause. My sister and I, crying our eyes out, whimpered together, "No, sir."

We didn't know what to say, what the correct answer should be, and as long as I could remember, we always had to answer with "sir." He replied, "This is what will happen," and then beat us again, even harder this time around.

Ah, memories of Dad make my skin crawl.

Did I mention I once saw him throw the family dog, a very lovable and cute Irish Sheppard, out the window?

Mom survived, and one day while Dad was at the office, packed up and left, taking us with her. I will always be so thankful for her courage and strength to leave.

I know it must have been hard for her,

as in 1982 in a small town in Tennessee full of Baptist churches, divorce was still very much taboo. And, to admit or talk about being in an abusive relationship just wasn't done. There was no "women's center" or support group she could go to. The only "safe space" we could flee to was my aunt and uncle's house in another town, where we hid out for a week, as Dad searched for us, calling places where we might be, threatening to kill Mom if he found her.

Years later, long after the threat of Dad had passed, the three of us—my mom, my sister and I—never talked together about those fucked up years. That was how we were supposed to deal with what happened. Just forget about it. It's over. Pretend everything was always fine.

Unfortunately, that never works out well. As another columnist wrote about last month, trauma doesn't go away. It builds inside, and makes an evil nest of anger and feelings that haven't been dealt with. Mom, who had been abused and never healed, then took her feelings out on my sister and I. This is the "cycle of abuse," a vicious pattern where one person's pain is inflicted upon another. I know it first hand, watching my father abuse my mother, and then my mother act out upon her daughters. I've also found this anger and violence within myself, and punk became an important outlet where I could scream and vent my demons.

As a teenager, arguments with my mom often got scary, and sometimes violent. Mom was usually "normal," and I think had the best intentions. But her moments of rage during a fight, generally after she had been drinking, were explosive dramatic moments that are even hard to think about or describe in words. She would become transformed, a ball of anger and tears and a total mental breakdown. She was frightening as hell, and sometimes dangerous. Upset and irrational, crying and screaming behind the wheel, Mom threatened to drive us off the road more times than I can remember.

My last year of high school was the worst, but even then, punk helped me cope. When I was home I would stay in my room and make fanzines (anyone remember *Sky Flying By*?), write to punk pen pals, and when no one was home, scream along to Dead Kennedy and Minor Threat tapes at full volume. I started going to shows, and even interviewed local and touring bands.

I also had the hope of the future. When my father died, part of his life insurance was set aside for my sister and I to go to school. I always felt so lucky for that money, for that ticket out of that small town, out of that life. I worked hard in my classes all through high school, obsessively making good grades as if my life depended on it. In 1992, I was accepted to Boston University, and packed my bags that fall, my first move to another place.

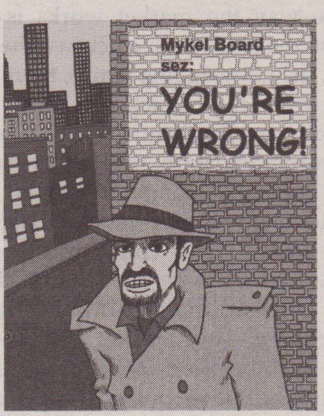
It was a chance to start over, to create my own life, a very excellent year. I went to just about every hardcore show I could, my notebook from that time listing two or three shows a week, as I was so excited to live in a city with so much going on. I also volunteered with Food Not Bombs, helping to serve food to homeless people in the Boston Commons, my first time working with a collective. That summer, I made my first trip out to the West Coast, alone via Greyhound, finding punks breathing fire in Oakland, and visiting Epicenter and Gilman for the first time. But that's a different story for another time.

And so today I smile, and am thankful for this nice view, and an excellent room to call my own. I laugh at the palm trees waving in the breeze, and I'm glad to be alive, and my travels have brought me here.

The biggest reason I decided to go ahead and write the second part of this column, thinking about my past, was for all the kids I know who are still stuck at home, dealing with crazy parents. *Don't forget, you are not alone, and you will eventually be free and your life will change.*

In Solidarity, Erika.
(e_bitchcrew@yahoo.com)

P.S. Cheers to JESUS FUCKING CHRIST, who I finally got to see play last week. They totally blew me away! Also, thanks again to my moving buddies, I appreciate it.



Nothing is so awkward as a demonstration of humanity by the enemy.

–Kobo Abe

It's gonna be a short one this time. (That's what she said.) I start this while sitting in Bryant Park behind the library. I count the gives and takes. Google gives me free Internet access. G-d gives me a sunny day. Alcohol takes my powers of concentration and coherent thought. And the day after tomorrow, Delta will take me to bring my spoken bilge to Chicago and Wisconsin.

It's been the usual litany of things gone wrong. My computer stops working. Sid calls to cancel my ride to Madison, then last minute, reinstates it. My body wakes up unable to sleep through the night. My brain makes senile mistakes: halting mid-sentence, forgetting the word *preposition.* My bank account uses up the last of my printer's red ink. That's my life. It goes wrong, but it goes—at least until it doesn't.

Flash ahead a couple days. I now write at the Marine Air Terminal at LaGuardia. I sit in a plush chair in front of an unused row of coin telephones. It would be a peaceful scene if it not for the 20-something two seats down from me. He gabs into his cell phone—non-stop—call after call. He's on the third.

"I just wanted to tell you I've accepted a position in Chicago," he says.

He wears a t-shirt, torn jeans, and he's *accepted a position.* People dressed like that don't accept positions. They get jobs. Guys in ties and white shirts accept positions. Professors with tweed jackets and elbow patches accept positions. You don't, future Mr. Cubicle Clerk. Everyone you're talking to can see that. Don't you realize what a jerk you are? Mom, the *I-love-you-too* girl, and your-only-friend-in-Jersey-City-who-you'll-miss-like-a-brother. They all know what a jerk you are. How come you don't?

Focus, Mykel! Focus! Back to the laptop.

I had planned this to be an *everything-you-know-is-wrong* column, but I don't have the time or space. I'm going to be traveling and will have to email this in from the road. You are just too wrong, and too militant in your wrongness for me to correct everything. I should write a book. I *did* write a book. So here, I'll just pick on a few points. At least you'll get a start.

Like the Christians who say that people who don't accept Jesus are condemned to damnation but people who've never heard about Jesus only go to purgatory, I'm giving you your chance. Here's *the truth.* If you reject it... it's hell for you, buster.

Flash ahead. I'm madder than a homo who gets a female doctor for his prostate exam. I'm actually sitting in the plane now. It's parked on the runway. Delayed. Something about thunderstorms in

Chicago last night. They caused back-ups today. The airlines have to add more planes to make up for the lost flights. More flights mean more delays. Behind me there's a crew of raucous laughter. Actually, *the* crew of raucous laughter. It's the two stewardesses on this flight. It's an ugly annoying sound when I feel so awful.

[Aside: Robert Heinlein once wrote that laughter was a disgusting reflex. We do it when someone is in pain, falls down the stairs, or just fucks up in an embarrassing way. Look at comedy. Except for wordplay jokes, we laugh at pain: dead babies; or humiliation: Polish people turning ladders to change light bulbs. I rarely laugh.]

Besides the stewardesses' guffaws, a baby cries, and half the passengers yak on cellphones.

Like me, the woman in the next seat taps away on her laptop. I'm not sure if I can steal a glance to find out what she's doing. I don't think you can check your email from a plane, and most people are ashamed to play solitaire in front of others… even Free Cell, which I'm up to a 12% winning percentage at the 4-suit level.

So it's exactly at this point I'm going to begin to explain the ways in which you are wrong. One of them is the way you make villains of people rather than ideas.

Newspapers report that 36% of Americans don't like Georgie Bush. *Rolling Stone* writes that he's the worst president in history. That should tell you something. The underdog. Hated in the nation. You'd expect punk rockers would be knee-jerk coming to his defense, like Republicans defending Enron. But no. There's just a chorus of glee at his unpopularity. You cheer every failure. Ignore the few victories.

But let's look. George proposed building a wall between the US and Mexico. *Bad.* He proposed allowing illegal aliens a fast track to stay in the US permanently. *Good.* As anti-Muslim fervor rises in America, Bush wants to sell US ports to the Arabs. That takes balls.

Bush stands by his appointments, his friends, his principles. He doesn't waver even if the public is against him. When gas prices rose and people turned against Clinton, that spineless sleazebag opened the oil reserves, depleting our safety supply to save his poll-numbers ass. Bush could have, but didn't.

The man has integrity. Just like one of my other heroes, Saddam Hussein. I may not want either of them as neighbors, but I respect that integrity…and I wouldn't mind having them as friends.

From Bush to broccoli. It's time to go on the veggie warpath again. I've seen too much spinach and tofu lately. It's making me sick.

Most thinking people assume that vegetarians are self-righteous rich kids who jump on moral bandwagons as fast as they jump on musical ones. Most thinking people are right.

Most thinking people also assume that, except for the annoyance of being told that what you eat is immoral and causes pain and suffering, vegetarians are harmless. Most thinking people are wrong.

Opening shot: a meadow. Shoot this through a blue-pink lens so everything looks peaceful and happy. Cows lazily graze, chewing their cud, while happy chickens peck joyfully at corn, worms, and other natural bird food.

Mistress Mary tends to her flock of sheep, dancing along, la de da. She stops on a large rock, pulls a bottle of Snapple out of her pocket, and chugs it down. Her flock lazily catches up with her, wagging their tails behind them. One of the woolly creatures nuzzles Mary. The cute animal tries to drink from the girl's bottle. Mary laughs, tilting the Snapple so the animal can lick it down.

Cut to the industrial orange lens. Streak it with gray or black for a grimy polluted look. A dark building holds tiny stalls, one next to the other: Wild-eyed cows, unable to move. Row upon row of chicken coops. One piled on top of the other. Shit pouring down in an ever-increasing brown rain from the top coops to the others below. Beaks painfully trimmed, the nearly paralyzed chickens peck their breakfast of offal and discarded parts of other chickens.

Your choice of scenes? You betcha.

The way the market works is if you choose the free-range chickens, the happy cows, the tail-wagging lambs, there will be more free-range chickens, happy cows, and tail-wagging lambs. If you choose the concentration camp meat, there will be more of that. Demand and supply.

And if you don't choose? Then your vote goes to the concentration camp. Businesses always do what's cheaper, more efficient, more harmful, unless the government—or market forces—make them do otherwise. With the vegetarians taking themselves out of the picture, the only market forces left are Wal-Mart and Burger King. Which side do you think *they're* on?

If people don't buy from the good guys, then the good guys go out of business. By not buying humane meat, vegetarians help create torture and disease for the animals they don't eat. That's how the market works. But that's not the end of it. Vegetarians also create disease for the rest of us… the human animals.

No one injects nasty chemicals into those happy animals in the happy meadow. Nobody feeds them bovine growth hormone. Nobody fills them with antibiotics to protect them from the shit falling on them. No shit falls on these animals in the first place.

But the miserable animals—the ones forced on us by the vegetarians—they've got more horrible substances in their bodies than I've had up my ass. It's a wonder they can call a chicken leg "chicken," it's got so much else in it. Tenderizers, salt, drugs of all descriptions, bacteria, you name it. All put there to protect the animal from the conditions vegetarians force them to live in. That shit is in *our* food. And even if the vegetarians manage to avoid it, they've forced it on the rest of us.

So we see that vegetarians force cruelty to animals, disease on non-vegetarians, and are responsible for everything bad except global warming. Wrong.

They're responsible for that too.

One of the greatest contributors to global warming is methane. That's the gas you light when you light a fart. Our bodies make it from the food we eat. It comes out in farts and shit.

Until vegetarian-encouraged factory farming, methane was only unpleasant—like vegetarians themselves. A fart in an elevator might unleash a few giggles, a cough or two, but not a whole lot more. Entering a bathroom where someone has just unleashed a holy beershit—especially a holy Guinness beershit—is an unpleasant experience, but not a serious one.

Factory farming has changed that. They've created incredible concentrations of animals. That means incredible concentrations of animal farts and shits. Giant continuous blasts of methane invade the atmosphere, are trapped by it. This methane, in turn, traps heat that would normally move to the upper stratosphere and dissipate. This heat is known as *global warming*.

Animals return nutrients to the soil. When they are well-managed and not too packed, they fertilize what feeds them. A pig eats carrots, shits nutrients back into the ground, making fertile ground for more carrots. Eating high on the food chain allows us to cull porcine over-population and keep the cycle going. If I eat a pig, I stop the fertilization, but I also stop the consumption. If I eat a carrot, I only stop plant production, while doing nothing to reduce plant consumption. Highest on the food chain is, of course, cannibalism. Checking out the overpopulation of vegetarians, that might not be such a bad idea.

Another way you're wrong is your knee-jerk hatred of big corporations. You pin them with the same crooked safety pin that you pin on Dubya or meat. Like with those others, you've missed this one too.

I now write sitting on a park bench by a river in Beaver Dam, Wisconsin. A few people fish from the nearby bridge. River water bubbles gently as it passes me. On the bench a few yards from me, an older colored lady rests with her feet up. A book in her hand, she lazily turns the pages. She doesn't notice me looking at her.

I think about how her world's been changed.

"Yeah," I think, "I hate Barnes and Noble and the way they've destroyed small bookstores. I hate Amazon-dot-Com for destroying bookstore browsing culture…and making huge contributions to the Republican Party. But if it weren't for Amazon and Barnes and Noble and Borders, this Negress might not have her book."

Huge corporations bring books and reading to millions of towns like Beaver Dam. People there might never see a book otherwise. Every shopping mall has a Barnes and Noble or Borders. Every computer has access to Amazon. Millions of people who might never read a book, now buy them because they can. Millions of people, who would never make the effort to step into their local libraries, pass Barnes and Noble and go in, just because it's there. It's a place to cool off. A place to sit and read. And for all their destructiveness in big cities, they may just be saving bookdom in towns like Beaver Dam.

My computer is beeping at me. The battery has almost run out. I've got to get back on the road anyway…head for the show in Appleton.

Next month I'll write about my adventures here. In the meantime, stand up, walk to the bathroom. Look in the mirror. Point to yourself and repeat after me: *you're wrong.*

ENDNOTES: [email subscribers (god@mykelboard.com) or website viewers (www.mykelboard.com) will get live links and a place to comment]

Whatever happened to the stockpile? dept: According to *The Progressive* magazine (March 2005), a US Air Force research team in the '90s recommended developing chemical weapons consisting of aphrodisiacs. The idea was to make enemy soldiers sexually irresistible to one another as a diversion. An added benefit would be the low morale caused by the resulting homosexuality—especially in Islamic countries. The plan was later abandoned.

Toronto-based *This Magazine* has created a website where Americans who want to hightail it up North can find a mate who'll marry them out of their servitude. Want to be a Canadian? Check www.actforlove.org

The Japanese Solution: Unlike America, Japan does not have immigration to save it from becoming an aging country. Since there are fewer workers supporting more oldsters, the oldsters are getting less money and fewer benefits. Some of them have figured out a way to insure themselves a warm bed and three meals a day: *crime!* The *AARP* reports that Japanese oldtimes have turned to a life of crime in order to get caught and put into prison. There, their accommodations and meals are taken care of. Sex too, probably.

Your government at work dept: That same issue of the *AARP Bulletin* (April, 2006) reports on Judy Lewis, a 68-year old Texan. She survived a stroke in December of last year, but the Social Security Administration pronounced her dead and canceled her benefits. Her congressman helped get her checks restored, but the SSA still counts her as *deceased*.

Man, check out that…er…where was I? dept: The *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience* (Feb. 2006) reports on a Toronto research team that discovered that older peoples' brains change in a way that make it hard to *filter out distractions and stay focused.* Something about left-brain/right-brain balance. I'll give you the details right after…what was that sound?

My jailed pal Cassidy Wheeler was thrown in the hole again for holding his pants up with a broken plastic safety razor. He tells me he's more persecuted for being a punk rocker than for violating rules. He needs outside contacts—and lawyers. Write to him at: *Cassidy Wheeler #14282456, O.S.P., 2605 State St., Salem, OR 97310.*

Finally getting smart department: The ACLU, which, until recently, contented itself with issuing boring proclamations about our eroding personal freedoms, seems to have finally gotten smart. They're making the point entertainingly. I hear they're gonna have TV commercials and sponsor a crime show. They've made a good start on the internet. Check out http://www.aclu.org/pizza/ for starters.

CrimethInc. Workers' Collective Bullet-in

"The idea that an understanding of genocide, that a memory of holocausts can only lead people to want to dismantle the system, is erroneous. The continuing appeal of nationalism suggests that the opposite is true: that an understanding of genocide has led people to mobilize genocidal armies, that the memory of holocausts has led people to perpetuate holocausts. The sensitive poets who remembered the loss, the researchers who documented it, have been like the pure scientists who discovered the structure of the atom. Applied scientists used the discovery to split the atom's nucleus, to produce weapons which can split every atom's nucleus; nationalists use the poetry to split and fuse human populations, to mobilize genocidal armies, to perpetrate new holocausts."
(-Fredy Perlman, *The Continuing Appeal of Nationalism)*

Hey friends, and welcome to another CrimethInc column. This time around, we're turning our microscope on the antifascist movement in Germany, where a strange form of anti-nationalist nationalism, known as the "Anti-German Critique," is running amok. Herein, we'll consider this ideology and its all-too-German adherents, who seem to be replacing German anti-fascism with a form of anti-German… well, read on and decide for yourselves. If you want to discuss this further, write the "Anti-Anti-German-But-Also-Anti-Germany" Discussion Group c/o CrimethInc, PO Box 2133, Greensboro, NC 27402. We also have a webpage at www.crimethinc.com.

Back in the 1990s, answering mail for the 'zine I used to publish, I noticed that Germans—even German anarchists—responded strangely whenever the conflict between Israel and Palestine came up. Every time anything related to the issue appeared in my 'zine, I got a lengthy letter from an irate German accusing me of Palestinian nationalism or even borderline anti-Semitism. I never once received such a letter from citizens of any other nation, even though the 'zine was distributed as far as Israel, nor did I ever receive one from a Jewish reader of any nationality. From my perspective, the positions in the 'zine on that issue were not particularly controversial: like most others in the anarchist community, I deplored the violence and racism of the Israeli military and the Zionist settler movement, while remaining suspicious of those seeking to capitalize on what I considered understandable Palestinian desperation. At the time, I interpreted these letters as nothing more than an overzealous effort on the part of some Germans to be sensitive about issues affecting Jewish people.

I returned to Europe last fall for the first time in some years. In the course of my travels, I discovered what had seemed like a minor blind spot in the German radical milieu had evolved into what I regard as a really problematic strain of thought: the "Anti-German Critique," a reactionary nationalism that masquerades as radical anti-nationalism. For adherents of this ideology, the important thing is not to oppose capitalism, racism, and hierarchy everywhere, but to oppose Germany and anti-Semitism specifically, even to the extent of supporting other capitalist nations and other forms of racism[1]. Revolutions being unforthcoming, Anti-German antifascists settle for supporting the current government of Israel, all the injustices it perpetrates notwithstanding, on account of the injustices perpetrated by its opponents.

At first, I only came across hints of this. Climbing the immense stairwell of the EKH, Vienna's longstanding squatted social center, I came upon a little exhortation scrawled on the wall: "Support Zionism." That's strange, I thought to myself: here, in an anarchist stronghold, graffiti urging people to rally to a cause already receiving more support from the United States than any other government in the world, and responsible for the displacement and repression of an entire population of people of color. In the ageless tradition of marker-bearing squatters, I added a little message of my own: "down with all isms—support people, not nations."

The following week found me staying at a social center in Dresden. Among the other occupants of the space were two Israelis, who—like many young Israelis I had met upon earlier visits to Europe[2]—were traveling the continent in order to avoid the draft that compels Israelis to serve in the military. I fell to talking politics with one of them. He declined to take a position on the Israel-Palestine conflict—an admirable enough stance for a person coming from such a complicated situation, who had accepted exile rather than risk killing or dying for a cause in which he did not believe.

Others in Germany had not respected his decision, however. He recounted to me his experience traveling for a few days with a German band; when it came out that he was avoiding military service, another person on the tour—a German gentile, otherwise committed to revolutionary politics—was outraged: "You mean you wouldn't serve to protect your people? You coward!"

Scarcely two days later, during an antifascist action in Leipzig, I had my first brush with Anti-Germans. I'll spare you the details of my participation in the event—suffice it to say my friends and I spent hours wandering around peering at photocopied maps, followed by a few exhilarating minutes being pursued by riot police through cordoned-off streets and over spiked fences, and in the end the scheduled fascist march was thwarted. After traveling throughout Southern and Eastern Europe, where fascism is gaining more and more power, it was a real relief to see it being held at bay somewhere. It was not so encouraging, however, to see US, Israeli, and British flags being unloaded at the departure point of an antifascist march.

I went immediately over to the young men unloading them. My German friend had urged me not to waste my time, but whether or not they would listen to me I was curious what they had to say for themselves.

"What are you doing with that flag?" I gestured at the stars and stripes one young fellow was pulling from the truck.

"We are going to march with it."

"I'm from the United States," I began, "and I can't fucking believe you would march with a US flag at this rally. Don't you know what this flag means?"

"But it is different here! Here, this flag is a symbol of the antifascist struggle."

"Listen, everywhere in the world that flag represents the same things: Hollywood, Coca-Cola, the absolute power of the capitalist market. What does that have to do with freedom?"

His answer was almost plaintive. "But Britain and the United States beat the German government! They were the only ones who could do it. We carry their flags to remember this."

"They fought that war with their armies segregated into black and white divisions, and Japanese citizens in internment camps! They weren't fighting for freedom, but for their own national power—just like in the genocidal wars against the Native Americans! That flag is stained with the blood of millions!"

"But they were the only ones who could stop the Nazis here," he repeated, almost sheepishly. I hadn't caught myself a particularly fierce Anti-German.

"That war only happened because people were willing to march under flags in the first place, and we could have won it without flags if people like you didn't insist on them. If you're going to march with that flag, count me out, and every antifascist like me in the US would do the same." I left to find my own route to block the fascists—hence the crazy chase scene involving the spiked fence.

That night, sporting a limp that lasted for weeks, I stayed at a squat in Erfurt. Here, someone had gone around to every poster that had read "Antifascist" and blacked out "fascist" to replace it with "Deutsch." What kind of people thought it was more important to take at stand against Deutschland than against fascism?

It wasn't until Hamburg, my last stop in Germany, that I got to have the discussion I'd wanted with a real live Anti-German. It was someone I knew: back in the '90s, he had booked my old punk rock band at a social center in Germany. He was thinner now, with a more haughty, intellectual air about him and a pencil-thin moustache.

"Yes," he was saying, "but your new band is… not so good, yes?" He nodded to me, eyebrows raised.

"We're a new band," I replied, gamely. "We've just learned new instruments. Over time, I hope we'll improve. But yes, right now, perhaps we are not so good."

"Your last band"—he paused for dramatic effect—"did not improve with time, I think. I saw you at the beginning of your last tour, and then at the end. Do you remember?"

"Yes, of course. I agree." Humility is the better part of celebrity, if you want to last an hour in punk circles.

"You know," he said, leaning his head back and looking into the middle distance, "I think when I first started to lose interest, it was when the record came out with the song about Intifada[3]."

"Aha!" I exclaimed, practically pounding my fist upon the ubiquitous foosball table—the game is known as "kicker" in Germany, and heaven help any foreigner who takes on even the drunkest of native players. "An Anti-German! I've been waiting for this! Let's get down to business."

"Yes, I think there is a lot where we do not agree! But maybe there is no reason even to talk about it." He darted me a sidelong glance. "For example, you said you live in the woods—you are against technology and civilization, yes? But for us, you know, we think that technology is just something that works. It spreads, because it works."

He had my complete attention now. "And other peoples who are less, shall we say, advanced…?"

"Ah, I see what you suggest. Yes, some might say that this is a Western-centered view. But people around the world are taking up this lifestyle as fast as they can."

"But you really can't argue that everything that spreads is a good thing. You know, a plague also spreads. A plague spreads because it works! And anyway, I am not against all technology—just technologies that promote hierarchy or water-down our experience of life. Besides, if everyone lived the way people in Germany and the US live, the planet would be wrecked in one generation."

"A plague spreads because it works," he repeated, nodding in slit-eyed appreciation of my clever rejoinder.

I learned later, in my research into Anti-German thought, that indeed, some Anti-German writers conceive of world history in terms of the progress of civilization (i.e., Western civilization), with the implication that other cultures are primitive. This is an old-fashioned Marxist analysis, in which capitalist technocracy is a stage of human evolution that must be passed through on the way to communist utopia; this was the excuse the Bolsheviks and Maoists gave for forcing millions to give up their traditional lifestyles in order to join the machinery of industrial communism. "There is something worse than capitalism and bourgeois society: its barbarous abolition," writes one Anti-German, and he goes on to make it explicit that he is referring to Arabic nationalism as well as German fascism. Thinking this way makes it easy enough to pose Israel and the United States as the flagships of culture and progress, and those dirty Arabs as the savages to whom the torch of Nazi irrationality and brutality has been passed.

But let's return to the conversation in Hamburg. "But what are the US flags for in the demonstrations?" I demanded.

"Ah, they are a joke, to wind people up," he explained. "There are certain people it is important to piss off with these flags. You know, in Germany, the right wing exploits the whole anti-American thing for its own purposes."

"But isn't it totally reactionary to carry them just because they bother your enemies? Does that mean you have to embrace the flag of such a destructive, oppressive nation?"

As I discovered later in my studies, if he had been a true hard-line Anti-German he would have explained to me that, because the US provides Israel with the money and guns to hold the entire Middle East at bay and do to the Palestinians as they please, it is not a destructive nation at all, but the foremost protector of peace. Instead, he opted for a more conciliatory approach: "This is a German thing, special to our German context. Here, where the holocaust took place, our most important job is to fight German power, and for this the flags are good."

I reflected a minute. "Isn't it very German to claim that in the German context, you have a special privileged perspective that justifies actions that don't make sense anywhere else?"

As their name implies, Anti-Germans put quite a bit of energy into establishing the special status of the German nation-state as an evil more terrible than any other. Accordingly, my companion launched into an explanation of why the Holocaust happened in Germany, why it could only happen in Germany, and why it was worse than any other atrocity in history. To hear him tell it, the status of the German state as perpetrator of the most terrible of all crimes grants certain special rights and powers of observation to its citizens: knowing anti-Semitism better than anyone else, they can see more clearly than others how it is still the most serious danger facing the world.

I wasn't able to follow his argument this far, though, as I was still getting over my shock at his dismissal of others' racist oppression and slaughter. "Wait, what about the extermination of the Native Americans?"

"That was different: that was simply a conflict over land and resources, and it was concluded when the last of the Indians surrendered. The Jews were law-abiding German citizens, and were singled out for purely racist, ideological reasons. You'll probably say that there were people in the death camps besides the Jews; but the Jews were the real targets of the *Shoah*[4]."

"Of course, Jewish people now have the means to talk about their experiences in the death camps, whereas the Romani people, who are still oppressed and dispossessed everywhere, are unable to get a hearing."

"Don't you think that sort of rhetoric is a little anti-Semitic, like saying there is a worldwide Jewish conspiracy?"

"It's very convenient for a gentile like you to call everyone who disagrees anti-Semitic! You'll recall that the last time I was here with a band that talked about Israel and Palestine, half of us were Jewish. Anyway, what about my earlier question? Isn't it nationalist to consider Deutsch culture a context unto itself apart from the international context? What ever happened to 'no borders, no nations'?"

He answered me with a phrase that summarized everything for me: "But that does not take into account our special situation. Here we say, 'destroy all nations, but Israel last.'"

In this formulation, we arrive at the central fallacy of the pro-Zionist position: the idea that nations protect their citizens. This is a fundamental misunderstanding of the way state power works. Each government argues to its citizens that it exists to protect them from other governments; but when nations fight, it is not governors that die, but their citizens. Thousands upon thousands upon thousands of Israelis have died since the formation of Israel in 1948. Former terrorists such as Shamir and Sharon have risen to power upon waves of fear, assuring their constituents that if anyone is to suffer, it will be Arabs—but their policies have continued to result in the loss of Israeli lives, while they die of old age[5].

Compared to the aforementioned Romani people, who are still persecuted across the whole of Europe, one might even say the Israelis have it worse: thanks to billions and billions of dollars from the United States, they are able to maintain an artificially high standard of living, but at any moment a suicide bomber may kill them or their loved ones. One must wonder if, given the opportunity, most Romani people would opt for power and luxury beneath the sword of Damocles over their current circumstances. Had they somehow been chosen by destiny to force a people out of their homeland and carry on a US-financed war against their neighbors for the past half-century, the results would surely be similar.

Neither fate, of course, is desirable. If Jews today were in the same situation as the Romani, that would also be a terrible tragedy. But let us not imagine that those are the only two possibilities for survivors of the Holocaust. Such a lack of imagination, that reduces all questions to a matter of picking the lesser of two evils, is at the heart of all the impasses that face us across the world today. It is the same lack of imagination that led people to mobilize around Kerry against Bush, rather than opposing the US government itself; it is the same lack of imagination that induces the Anti-Germans to side with the state of Israel against its enemies, rather than with us against nationalism and enmity themselves.

To be sure, the Jews who have been murdered worldwide over the past six decades have been killed by anti-Semites. Anti-Semitism has flourished among Arabs, and much is made of this by the Anti-Germans, who trace Arabic nationalism back to early connections between certain Arabs and German Nazis. But these few connections would have been meaningless if Arabic anti-Semites had not had been able to make use of Israeli atrocities in the years that followed to recruit converts. The violence in the Middle East today is not the direct successor to the Nazi Holocaust; rather, it is the result of the violence committed by survivors of that Holocaust, who became abusers in their turn—as survivors all too often do.

Until now, we have barely touched upon the number of Palestinians and other Arabs who have suffered at the hands of the Israeli state. If one is making an argument for nations as protectors of human beings, one must take all human beings into account, not only the citizens of certain nations—unless one believes the others to be subhuman. Here, we can see that the cost of the establishment and perpetuation of the state of Israel has been colossal in terms of the suffering and death of both Israelis and Palestinians.

As anarchists, we can find the explanation for this not in the innate bloodthirstiness and anti-Semitism of Arabs (nor the imperialistic machinations of Jews, for that matter), but in the way nationalists and nation-states pit human beings against one another. For us, the answer is clear: we must struggle against the governments of Israel and Palestine, as well as those of the US, Germany, and all other nations. So long as one intolerant, violent, self-interested government is able to carry on unchallenged, it will be all too easy for rival governments to muster frightened adherents to commit murderous acts as well. So-called pragmatists, who insist that we must support one or another of these gangs, would have us perpetuate the whole mess into eternity. We can find our solidarity with all Palestinians and Israelis who struggle against their own rulers on the basis of a recognition of each other's humanity[6].

Before we conclude, let's revisit the origins and mentality of the Anti-German ideology, as it exemplifies many of the potential pitfalls for radicals in today's global context. Long before the Nazis came to power in Germany, opposition to capitalism and the rich was often directed against caricatures of "the International Jew." Many German nationalists considered the proletariat to be composed of non-Jewish Germans, who were supposedly preyed upon by Jewish moneylenders; the implication was that by getting rid of the Jews, the capitalist system could be symbolically cleansed of its parasites. Anti-Semitism was taken for granted in many revolutionary circles: Bakunin, one of the most famous early anarchist thinkers, made anti-Semitic remarks, and Mussolini himself started out with an interest in anarchism. Revolutionary working class activism was co-opted by National Socialism such as that of Mussolini's Blackshirts no less than by Nationalist Socialism such as that of the Bolsheviks. This checkered heritage makes it easy for the Anti-Germans to read anti-Semitism in the radicalism of their contemporaries, whether it's there or not.

Today, fascists in Germany and other nations have similarly muddied issues by adopting environmentalist and anti-globalization stances. It would be nice to stop at the conclusion that the Anti-Germans have simply been provoked by their enemies into thoughtlessly adopting contradictory positions, but the fact that they have crossed into nationalism and borderline racism suggests something more insidious: that in setting out to resist fascism, they have been infected by it, perhaps as a result of the same German predispositions they aim to oppose. In studying their example, we can recognize the importance of developing a nuanced critique of power relations, but we are also reminded of Nietzsche's dictum that those who do battle with monsters must take care lest they become monsters themselves.

Every holocaust justifies itself on the pretext of protecting innocents. In the US, during the extermination of Native Americans (and, later, during the segregation era), white women were said to be threatened by colored savages; in Nazi Germany, citizens of pure "Aryan blood" were fetishized as victims of a worldwide conspiracy of degenerates. In coming to see the Jewish people as a category—"the" endangered, "the" victims of oppression—rather than committing to a struggle against injustice everywhere and in all forms, the Anti-Germans set the stage for themselves to end as abettors of racist, nationalist war. It is easy to see how German radicals, eager to distance themselves from their nation's anti-Semitic history and desperate to oppose a resurgent fascist movement, might prioritize Jewish concerns over others. But this is sometimes how new atrocities occur: the survivors of persecution become persecutors, and others, anxious to atone for condoning their former persecution, turn a blind eye.

Anti-German partisanship for Israel, once set in motion, did not lack justification and encouragement: there is an entire propaganda industry given over to rationalizing Israeli policy, just as there is another given to taking advantage of it to mobilize Arabic resistance groups. Zionist Israelis are indeed victims in the Israel-Palestine conflict, as are Palestinian suicide bombers; the problem is that both fight not to end the conflict but to win it. The Anti-German phenomenon should remind anarchists not to hurry to pick sides in national and ethnic strife; we must, rather, side with whatever parts of those struggling resonate with our desires to supercede the terms of such conflicts, however buried those parts may be. We can intercede in the manner demonstrated by Rachel Corrie, the US activist killed by a bulldozer of the Israeli Defense Force while fighting to protect Palestinian homes: not so that one side may triumph, but to help human beings survive an inhuman conflict.

All this is complicated, for sure. In a world in which seemingly everybody is lined up on one side or another of such conflicts, it seems those who would take sides with everyone against conflict itself find themselves apart from everyone else—even at odds with them. But again, let us learn from the Anti-Germans: those who resign themselves to the failure of revolutionary prospects turn, defensively, into the very monsters they so recently opposed.

[1] The word racism is used in this text to call attention to the double standards so many white people bring to their considerations of the Palestine/Israel conflict. One must be a racist to compare the living conditions of average Palestinian and Israeli families today and not see injustice, however things stand in the gang war. It's also impossible to describe the policies of the Israeli government, which disenfranchise, dominate, and humiliate Palestinians the same way apartheid did native Africans in South Africa, as anything less than racist. Some

Palestinians might also be described as having racist ideas, but they are hardly in a position to subject Israelis *en masse* to such dehumanizing treatment.

[2] Among others, I had spent time with members of the band Dir Yassin, an anarchist and anti-Zionist band from Israel. They were interviewed in the anarcho-punk magazine *Profane Existence* in 1998, and with luck you can still find the interview at www.angelfire.com/il/deiryassin/peinter.htm.

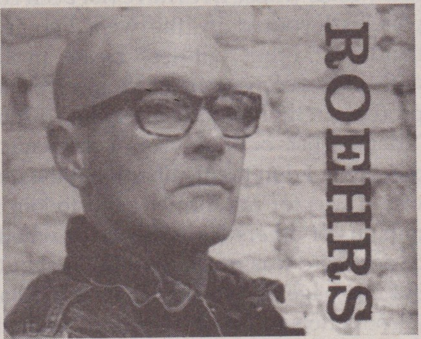
[3] The offending song, named "Called Terrorists by Terrorists," was explained thus in the liner notes: "The title of this song refers to the well-known murder of United Nations mediator Count Folke Bernadotte, who was killed on orders from future Israeli politician Yitzhak Shamir. Bernadotte was appointed in 1948 to negotiate between the Palestinian natives and the Zionists who were attempting to establish an Israeli state in their homeland; he was the former head of the Swedish Red Cross, and had risked his life to save thousands of Jews from concentration camps during the Second World War. After months of studying the situation, Bernadotte concluded that in the interests of human decency if the Zionists were to eventually be given sovereignty over a part of Palestine, Palestinian refugees who had been driven out by Zionist violence should be given two options: they should be allowed to return to their stolen lands, or else receive compensation from the new nation of Israel for what had been taken from them. The day after he made his proposal, he was killed by Zionist terrorists carrying out Shamir's instructions. Years later, supported by a media blackout on the past and the fact that history is always written by the victors, Shamir was able to join other world leaders in referring to the Palestinians who still resisted the racist repression of his regime as 'terrorists' without anyone bringing up his own blood-soaked past."

[4] *"Shoah"* is a Hebrew word for the Holocaust.

[5] With the exception, of course, of Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, who was assassinated by a Zionist Jew for fear he might make progress towards a peaceful and just solution to the conflict. One would think this, if anything, would have turned the Israeli public against militant Zionism—but no, he was succeeded in power by a right wing hardliner.

[6] In that spirit, I'd like to conclude this text with a poem by leading Israeli author Aharon Shabtai:

I, too, have declared war:
You'll need to divert part of the force
deployed to wipe out the Arabs—
to drive them out of their homes
and expropriate their land—
and set it against me.
You've got tanks and places,
and soldiers by the battalion;
you've got the rams' horns in your hands
with which to rouse the masses;
you've got men to interrogate and torture;
you've got cells for detention.
I have only this heart
with which I give shelter
to an Arab child.
Aim your weapons at it:
even if you blow it apart
it will always,
always mock you.



Never Break Me

Fuck yes!

The mighty REDUCERS SF have delivered a brilliant new LP for you skins and punks! The new full length is called *Raiser Your Hackles* and this shit augments the strong collection of drinking songs for thinking skinheads! The REDUCERS SF have ten years of fervent pub rock experience under their belts and they continue to get better with each passing year! It did not hurt to share a stage with COCK SPARRER and THE TEMPLARS. The REDUCERS SF *Raise Your Hackles* album shows you a street-wise rock n' roll band at the top of their game!

On this album, the REDUCERS SF include a couple of variations on their time-tested theme. The skinhead music on this record will make the hair stand up on your neck! The REDUCERS SF are a national treasure! They start off strong with "Fading Away" and then immediately drop the hammer on you with "You Got Nothing." Read a snippet of these lyrics: "Will you were talking away saying nothing, much at all / How my manners are horrible / How I should grow up, its time to move on / But you know what I think about that / You got nothing on me / Ya hear what I said, ya got nothing on me / Cause I'll stick around and mess up your reality / Cause people like you mean nothing to people like me / It may take some time for you to understand / Find your own way and let me be / Well, I'll be hanging around have a laugh, crack open a beer." Fucking A!

The REDUCERS SF power through "Knocked Out" and arrive at "Who's to Blame," about the travails of the workingman. A smattering of lyrics will illustrate the point: "Who's to blame for this life of work / And who's to blame for the handout jerks / Always broke down / All in this town / The sixteen tons grow / Just do your job and don't ask for more / Ten years on / And the moneys all gone / The years have been wasted and his mind is blown / Who's to blame for this life of work / And whose to blame for the handout jerks / I'll fight through it / Even though it makes me sick / I'll fight through it everyday / I'll fight through it / Even though it makes me sick / A decade blows by / Dark days in my eyes / I'll set my sights and fight through it / Don't think that way / Do what we say / Tolerance wears thin / The walls the walls keep closing in / The pass the buck agenda / The victim propaganda / They've tried to blame me far too many times." Yes!

The next song, "The Night," shows a dark side of the REDUCERS SF songwriting and singing. This is very thought provoking—you must hear it for yourself! After listening to "Out Tonight" you get "Carry On," which has truisms about how the arrogant bastards during the dot-com craze showed the people who worked in labor no respect—now those fucks are working for us! The REDUCERS take you through "Troubles and Pain," "Over the Edge" (with pithy observations about the blue collar struggle), and "Never Break Me." "Never Break Me" has some words of wisdom for you: "For some freedom might be just the thing I lack / All the years spent / Doing what they expect / Got to think for myself / Yea to think for myself / Show the world I'm not like all of them / they try their best but they'll never break me / They try their best but they'll never change me / This whole damn world won't make me / No matter what they say / They try their best, but they'll never break me / Same old story / Sung time and time again / Fight it out yea us v them / Feeling wound up with no room to vent / But they can't bust me only on intent." These words ring true!

The next stunning working class anthem is "Hired Hand." This fucking song will cut you to the quick! Read on: "All I've done and all I owe / It follows me wherever I go / Another day and another night / it could break me down / But I'll never let it / I know I've never been the world's smartest man / Just a hired hand / I've never amounted to do much good / I never wanted to be the president / Or a big 'exec' / I'm happy right where I stand now / Somehow eking out a tight living / How long till I fucking crack / Getting by observing every minute / Lest I lose the shirt on my back / Try to take hard hits from life's lessons / I can't hear a word they say / Hoping one day the sun will shine down / And take away my misery."

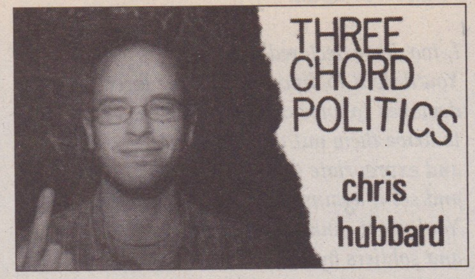
The *Raises Your Hackles* album finishes with "Jokes on Me" and "We are the Same." This is an absolutely great CD by veteran American pub rock champions. Get this shit now at www.tkorecords.com!

You shitkickers are in luck! Steelcage Records has unleashed a compilation of the legendary HAMMERLOCK's past work on record and compact disc! These Confederacy of Scum stalwarts have a rich history of speaking their mind on everything from gun control to the death penalty. The music on this disc reminds you—HAMMERLOCK answers to no one. HAMMERLOCK offers no apologies. How fucking unusual—a band so honest that you cannot pigeonhole them with your packaged hippie-punk product! On the HAMMERLOCK *True Grit—The First Five Years*, you get music from *Anthems for Outlaws* and *American Asshole*, both originally on Man's Ruin Records.

Hey punk! You *need* this fucker in your house! Play "Hate Radio," "Sunshine," or "Take Me Down the Road." This will shock some brain cells into activity! You stouthearted individuals can cue up "Media Sucker," "Carried by Six," "Mexican Sun," "Black Fast Stomp," "Whiskey Drinkin' Woman," "Thought I Was an Outlaw," "Tear 'Em Down," "American Asshole," "Devils Right Hand," or "Tennessee Whiskey" and your world will improve immediately!

The fucking best news for you scum punks is HAMMERLOCK is stronger than ever after eleven years in the trenches and will destroy your little politically correct world with a new release very soon! You can contact Steelcage Records at: www.steelcagerecords.com.

Until next month...See you fucks around...See you at the bar!



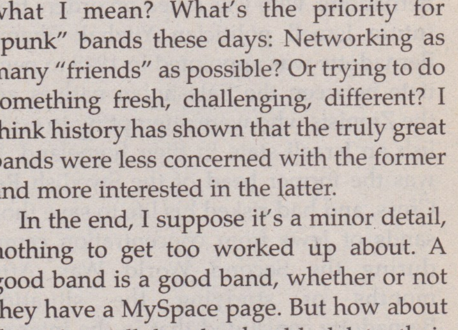
Last fall, I started playing in a band here in San Francisco. Though we were together for only a handful of shows and never recorded a note of music in our brief existence, our name lives on forever in the eternal realm of MySpace.com. Surely everyone is familiar with or at least aware of what is now the internet's third most visited website—but just in case, here's a quick overview of MySpace for the handful of lucky folks whose lives have not been completely devoured by the web: People or bands (or other entities) create profiles with little descriptions of themselves, and profiles are linked to one another through "friends" lists or other users' comments. At this point, I don't remember what the motivation was for my former band to join the millions of others on MySpace or whether or not there was much discussion about it, but our page on the site was my firsthand introduction to this bizarre and addictive world. The longer I work with *MRR*, the more I see how popular this site is becoming in the punk scene. Seemingly every band sending a record or demo for review has a MySpace page, particularly the newer, less-established ones.

I suppose the pros are readily apparent: Free web presence and instant exposure, access to large numbers of people for information about shows or releases, a place to host pictures and sound files, and so on. Detractors have brought up the fact that MySpace is now owned by Fox, a multinational, multi-billion-dollar corporation. This criticism is unfortunately accurate, though somewhat selectively applied—I've never heard of a band being criticized for hosting a website on AOL.com (owned by TimeWarner) or geocities.com (owned by Yahoo), or for using free email from Yahoo or Google for that matter.

So what's the big deal? The more I think about it, the more I feel that the MySpace phenomenon is indicative of bands' willingness to jump into the mainstream, to follow the trend at the expense of any sort of individuality. It's easy to create a web identity for your band on MySpace—you don't need any talent or songs or ideas. In theory, that's cool, in the true spirit of punk rock. But there's nothing cool or interesting about a MySpace page—no matter what eye-catching background you choose or what obscure old bands you list as influences, yours is still going to look basically the same as the other thousands and thousands of bands' pages out there. MySpace puts your band in an easily-digestible format for mass consumption. It's boring, it's safe, and at this point we've all seen it before. If I never had to look at another band's MySpace page, I would be pleased. The impulse to assimilate what ostensibly is a creative project should be resisted, not indulged. In other words, if I were in a band right now, I'd want it to stand out from the crowd, not fall in with it, y'know what I mean? What's the priority for "punk" bands these days: Networking as many "friends" as possible? Or trying to do something fresh, challenging, different? I think history has shown that the truly great bands were less concerned with the former and more interested in the latter.

In the end, I suppose it's a minor detail, nothing to get too worked up about. A good band is a good band, whether or not they have a MySpace page. But how about this idea—all bands should delete their MySpace profiles immediately. If you're afraid to do it on account of people out there in internet land won't know or care about your band anymore, well...if that's the kind of thing you're worried about, then there's a real good chance your band probably sucks in the first place.

Contact: chris@maximumrocknroll.com / PMB #241 / 530 Divisadero St. / San Francisco, CA 94117 / USA



Don't take it personal
I choose my own fate
I follow love
I follow hate.
—The Raincoats

We went to the woman's house—her name was Jessica—because Chris had bought some fanzines from her, and because she was going to give him some live and demo cassette tapes of '80s bands she had traded for through the years. Jessica was getting rid of her collection—or, I should say, one of her collections, as she was an obsessive pack rat with all sorts of shit all over her house—to clear the way for new stuff, and to get rid of the (ahem) "karmic weight" of having a lifetime of junk in a tiny city flat. We weren't the first punks (or even the first *MRR* columnists, actually) to troll through her massive archive. By the time we got there, the Svart Framtid and Wretched EPs and first issues of *MRR* were already long gone, but there were plenty of old tapes, flyers, and zines to drool over, not to mention a few piles of records as well. A lot of it was dregs, frankly (later Tar Babies LP? No thanks), but regardless there was plenty of unexpected treasure still to be unearthed.

For me, part of the pleasure was hearing Jessica talk, which didn't take much prompting. Turns out she had been good friends with Tim Tonooka of *Ripper* fanzine, and had spent much of the '80s and '90s helplessly obsessed with punk rock, trading tapes and flyers with pen pals from around the world aided by the classifieds section of *Maximum*. She confessed that she had always been particularly fixated on hearing live tapes and demos, because they were the rawest. As such, she had an incredible collection of cassettes that she had traded with people from all over the world. She also emphasized that she had always formed her closest relationships with other women in the scene during those years. "Remember," she told me, "there weren't so many of us back then, so we took care of each other." A few more moments of reflection, and she added, "Besides, punk chicks are just *better* than punk dudes."

Punk girls taking care of each other, my total obsession in this sweaty male scene, complete with our own soundtracks and stories passed down and around, arsenal against punk psychic death. So I listened to Jessica joyfully, happy to be hearing some non-bro version of the story from that so-called golden era, instead of hearing the Great White Fathers intone their tales of how they invented punk again, all while I found some of the classic girl punk records in her record boxes. All of the Delta 5 singles, Modettes singles, and my long-time holy grail, the first Raincoats 7" and LP (not to mention DIY obscurities like the Conflict US LP and the Tozibabe EP). She was equally pleased to be passing along these items from her collection to me: "I'm glad that you're taking that Raincoats LP," she said, "because that's not just a record to me."

I knew what she meant, so I nodded. Before that day, I had passed on buying the first Raincoats LP at it's "going" rate of $50 or so a bunch of times. When I first poked around looking for it, the idea of spending that much on a piece of vinyl was totally alien to me even as a concept—I had no idea that people did it—and even when I understood that there was such a thing as a "punk record collector" it seemed unfair that someone would demand that much for that LP. I mean, the record was already *mine* as much as anything can belong to a person. My fuzzy, second generation cassette copy of the record was constantly in my tape deck and had been since I was 14, in those years being carried around in my back pocket waiting to be played, or just keeping me company through the constricting halls of my high school.

The Raincoats...what can I say? The Raincoats spoke directly to me like they were telling me a secret—maybe it has something to do with the warm bedroom tones of their early records—and it still sounds like they're telling me stories, making us into something like friends. They made me feel this when I was young and sheltered from the world as I now see it, and I feel it still with the world in the full color of adulthood, with both its darks and lights. I think the Raincoats will still be with me when I'm 80, and I imagine they'll have grown older too, because when I was a teenager they sounded like teenaged music and now they sound a bit more adult. They'll be right there with me, giggling at the future foibles of man, still singing about and thus filling the void, the void, the void.

Let me break it down for you: I listen to hardcore punk pretty much every single day, and I have for a long time. Over a decade without a break in my enthusiasm. I have spent so much time and money on it that I can practically hear my parents gentle weeping even from 3000 miles away. The Raincoats I don't listen to every day, but that's because I don't really have to, you know? The Raincoats, and I have said this for a long time, are the perfect band for two girls to fall in love to. Those first two records are such secret society music, and what's more secret society than two girls in love, in on the joke together, creating their own storyline, building their own monuments, indulging in their own ideal? I don't need to listen to the Raincoats every day, just like I don't necessarily need to talk to my closest friends every day to feel the weight of their support. It doesn't mean they aren't there; it just means that they are the foundation.

Anyway, so back to the story...there I was with Jessica, this woman handing me down her Raincoats records, me thinking wouldn't it be great if this record just went on like this, from generation to generation of knowing girls and women, all bonded by the familiar notion of putting on this scratchy old record in our bedrooms and having these rad girls right by our side? She sold me the LP for like, $4, and I'm listening to it now and thinking about this band because the Raincoats to me are the soundtrack to my idea of punk girls taking care of each other, all of us dirt-in-fingernails girls, because they don't have to tell you that they're there, they just *are*. And with them, so am I.

*

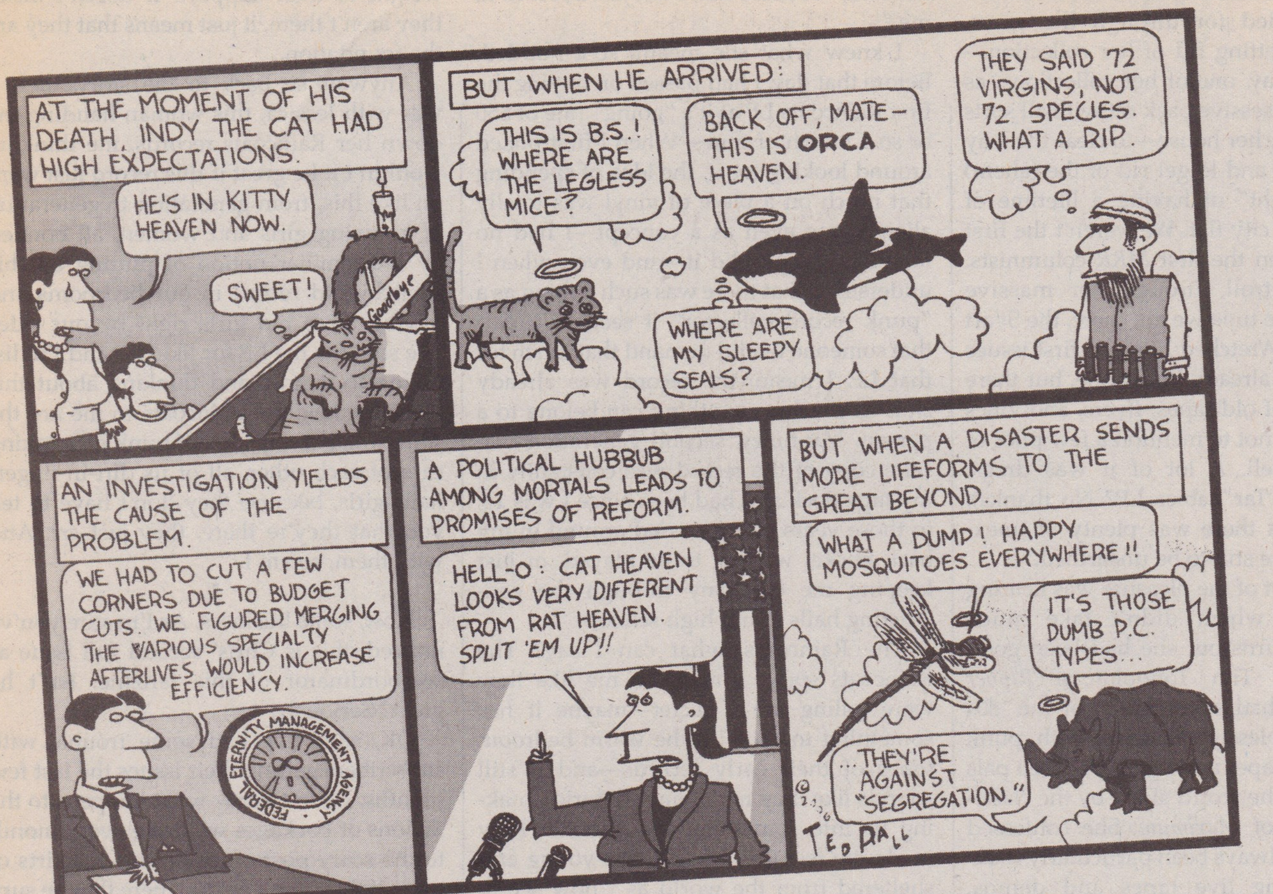
Now, some business. As I'm sure you've noticed, this is Chris' second full issue as co-coordinator of this fanzine. Isn't he great? Seriously.

OK, so we've had some trouble with subscribers getting their issues the last few months. I don't know what happens to the zillions of packages we drive every month to the scary post office on the outskirts of town if they don't get to where they're supposed to, but needless to say it seems like the postal service has it in for the punx. But we are working it out so don't worry, and if you are worried, get in touch.

I enjoy trading things. Things like letters, records, witty banter, insults, mix tapes. Here is how you can be a part of that process: Golnar Nikpour, PMB #241, 530 Divisadero St., San Francisco, CA 94117. Or, for you click-n-send types: golnar@maximumrocknroll.com

I also enjoy listening to things. Here are some current faves, just for the hell of it: Roky Erickson – *The Evil One* 2xLP, Criminal Damage – LP, Tyvek – EP, Young Offenders – demo and live, The Brat – *Attitudes* 10", Giant Haystacks – CD-R of new recordings, Jack & the Rippers – *I Think It's Over* LP, No Slogan – *No Pasaran* EP.

Oh, and Paco (the handsome model being strangled in my column header every month and candidate for "greatest dude ever") did an amazing radio special of old and obscure Latin American punk when he rolled through town this past week. Listen to it or pose (and listen to his Spanish punk special while you're at it, if you haven't already): www.maximumrocknroll.com/radio


AT THE MOMENT OF HIS DEATH, INDY THE CAT HAD HIGH EXPECTATIONS.
HE'S IN KITTY HEAVEN NOW.
SWEET!
Goodbye
BUT WHEN HE ARRIVED:
THIS IS B.S.! WHERE ARE THE LEGLESS MICE?
BACK OFF, MATE— THIS IS ORCA HEAVEN.
WHERE ARE MY SLEEPY SEALS?
THEY SAID 72 VIRGINS, NOT 72 SPECIES. WHAT A RIP.
AN INVESTIGATION YIELDS THE CAUSE OF THE PROBLEM.
WE HAD TO CUT A FEW CORNERS DUE TO BUDGET CUTS. WE FIGURED MERGING THE VARIOUS SPECIALTY AFTERLIVES WOULD INCREASE EFFICIENCY.
FEDERAL ETERNITY MANAGEMENT AGENCY
A POLITICAL HUBBUB AMONG MORTALS LEADS TO PROMISES OF REFORM.
HELL-O: CAT HEAVEN LOOKS VERY DIFFERENT FROM RAT HEAVEN. SPLIT 'EM UP!!
BUT WHEN A DISASTER SENDS MORE LIFEFORMS TO THE GREAT BEYOND...
WHAT A DUMP! HAPPY MOSQUITOES EVERYWHERE!!
IT'S THOSE DUMB P.C. TYPES...
...THEY'RE AGAINST "SEGREGATION."
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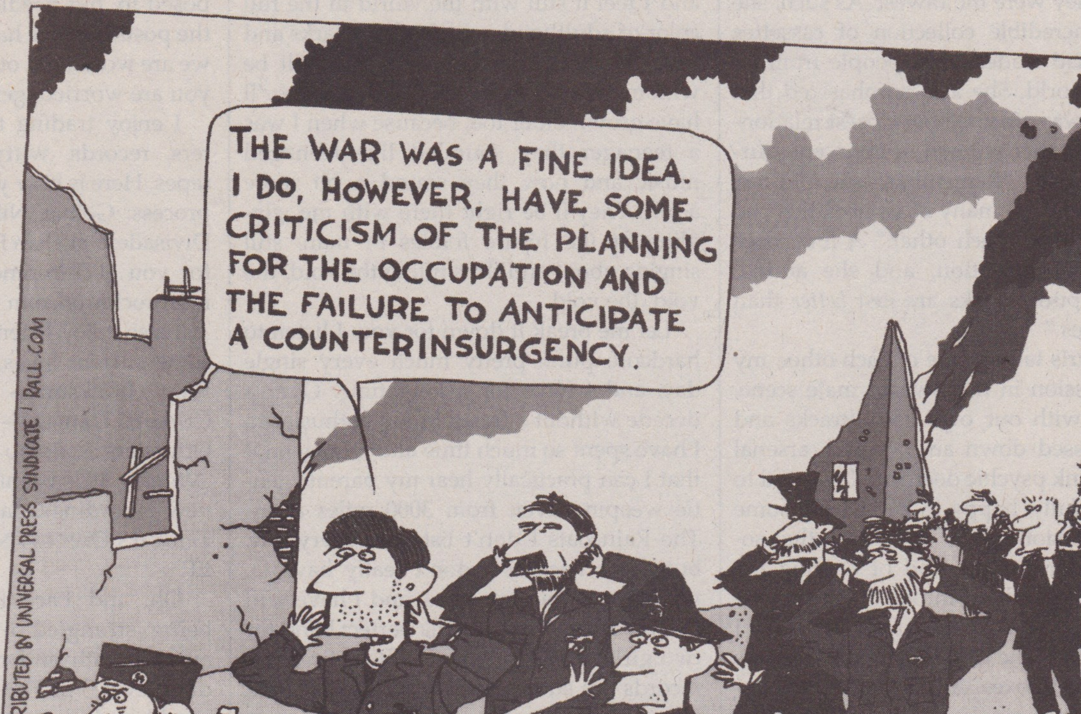
THE WAR WAS A FINE IDEA. I DO, HOWEVER, HAVE SOME CRITICISM OF THE PLANNING FOR THE OCCUPATION AND THE FAILURE TO ANTICIPATE A COUNTERINSURGENCY.
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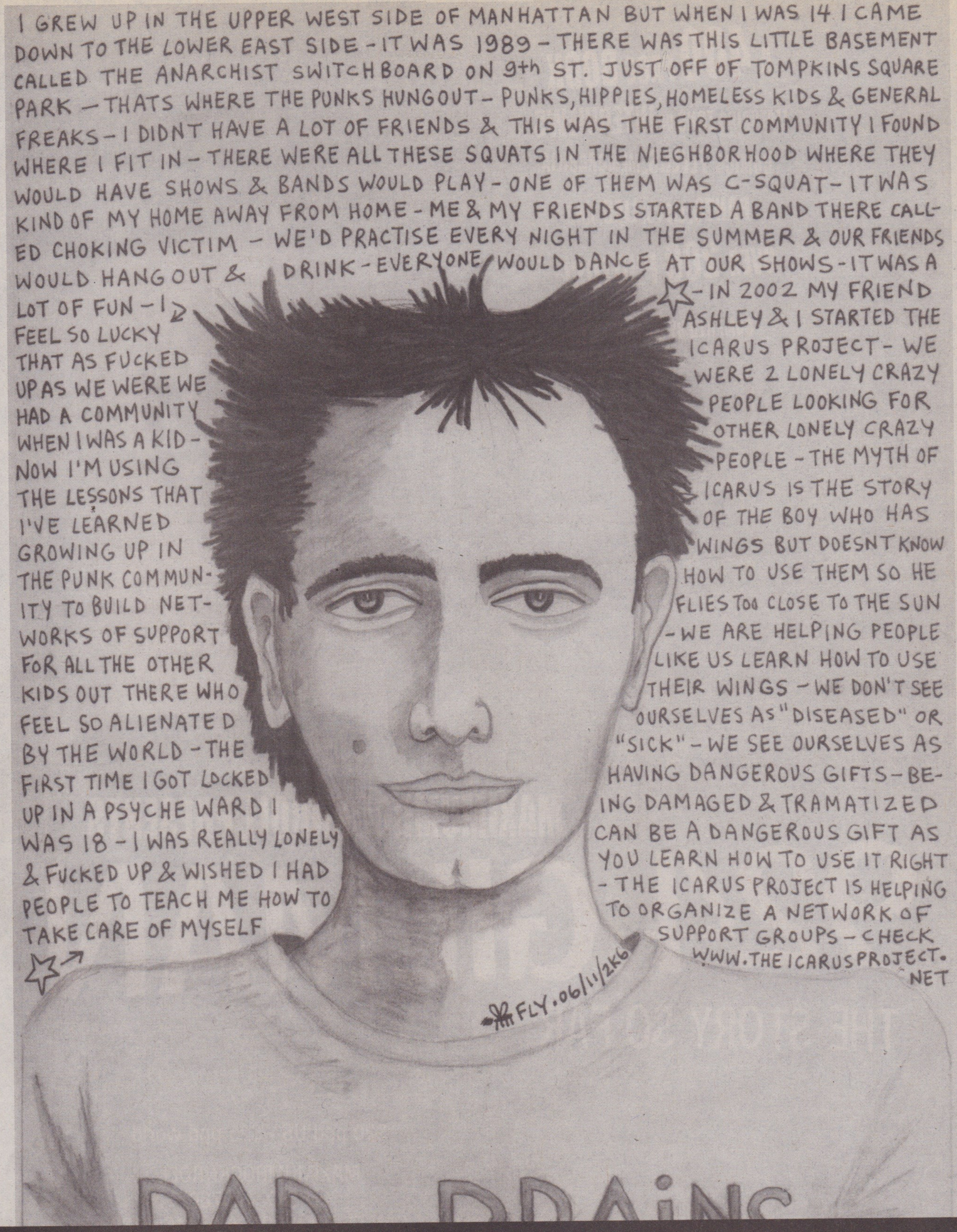
PEOPS

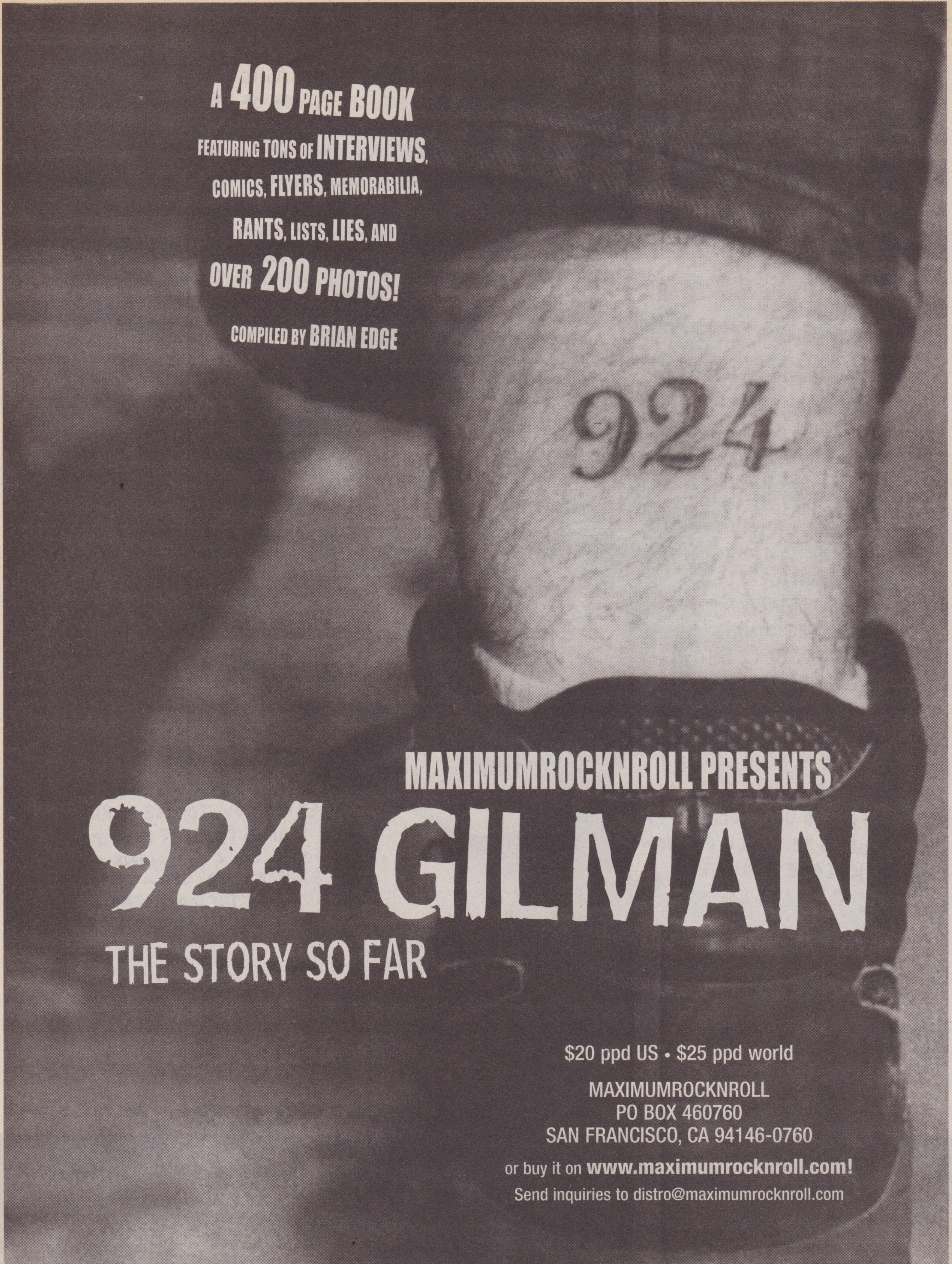


I GREW UP IN THE UPPER WEST SIDE OF MANHATTAN BUT WHEN I WAS 14 I CAME DOWN TO THE LOWER EAST SIDE - IT WAS 1989 - THERE WAS THIS LITTLE BASEMENT CALLED THE ANARCHIST SWITCHBOARD ON 9th ST. JUST OFF OF TOMPKINS SQUARE PARK — THATS WHERE THE PUNKS HUNGOUT - PUNKS, HIPPIES, HOMELESS KIDS & GENERAL FREAKS - I DIDNT HAVE A LOT OF FRIENDS & THIS WAS THE FIRST COMMUNITY I FOUND WHERE I FIT IN - THERE WERE ALL THESE SQUATS IN THE NIEGHBORHOOD WHERE THEY WOULD HAVE SHOWS & BANDS WOULD PLAY - ONE OF THEM WAS C-SQUAT - IT WAS KIND OF MY HOME AWAY FROM HOME - ME & MY FRIENDS STARTED A BAND THERE CALLED CHOKING VICTIM — WE'D PRACTISE EVERY NIGHT IN THE SUMMER & OUR FRIENDS WOULD HANG OUT & DRINK - EVERYONE WOULD DANCE AT OUR SHOWS - IT WAS A LOT OF FUN - I FEEL SO LUCKY THAT AS FUCKED UP AS WE WERE WE HAD A COMMUNITY WHEN I WAS A KID - NOW I'M USING THE LESSONS THAT I'VE LEARNED GROWING UP IN THE PUNK COMMUNITY TO BUILD NETWORKS OF SUPPORT FOR ALL THE OTHER KIDS OUT THERE WHO FEEL SO ALIENATED BY THE WORLD - THE FIRST TIME I GOT LOCKED UP IN A PSYCHE WARD I WAS 18 - I WAS REALLY LONELY & FUCKED UP & WISHED I HAD PEOPLE TO TEACH ME HOW TO TAKE CARE OF MYSELF

☆ - IN 2002 MY FRIEND ASHLEY & I STARTED THE ICARUS PROJECT - WE WERE 2 LONELY CRAZY PEOPLE LOOKING FOR OTHER LONELY CRAZY PEOPLE - THE MYTH OF ICARUS IS THE STORY OF THE BOY WHO HAS WINGS BUT DOESNT KNOW HOW TO USE THEM SO HE FLIES TOO CLOSE TO THE SUN - WE ARE HELPING PEOPLE LIKE US LEARN HOW TO USE THEIR WINGS - WE DON'T SEE OURSELVES AS "DISEASED" OR "SICK" - WE SEE OURSELVES AS HAVING DANGEROUS GIFTS - BEING DAMAGED & TRAMATIZED CAN BE A DANGEROUS GIFT AS YOU LEARN HOW TO USE IT RIGHT - THE ICARUS PROJECT IS HELPING TO ORGANIZE A NETWORK OF SUPPORT GROUPS - CHECK WWW.THEICARUSPROJECT.NET

Sascha Scatter aka Sascha Altman Dubrul – 06/11/2K6 – Lower East Side – NYC

I drew this portrait after spending the whole weekend at a comics convention so I was really burnt out and I forgot to finish the hair on the right side of Sascha's head – sorry Sascha! – he was also really tired from playing a show with Choking Victim in Tompkins Square Park where all the kids went nuts – I first met Sascha I think in 1993 & sort of adopted him as a little brother – he is an amazingly talented writer (& bass player) & has been putting out zines for over a decade – his first book, *Carnival of Chaos*, was published by Autonomedia I think in 1996 – Sascha is the co–founder of the Icarus Project which is an organization dedicated to radical approaches to mental health – I highly recommend checking out the website – www.theicarusproject.net – to contact Fly email fly@bway.net (put *MRR* in the subject so I know it's not spam) – *PEOP(le)s* #3 zine is now available – $5 pp US – send to Fly PO Box 1318 Cooper Stn NYC NY10276



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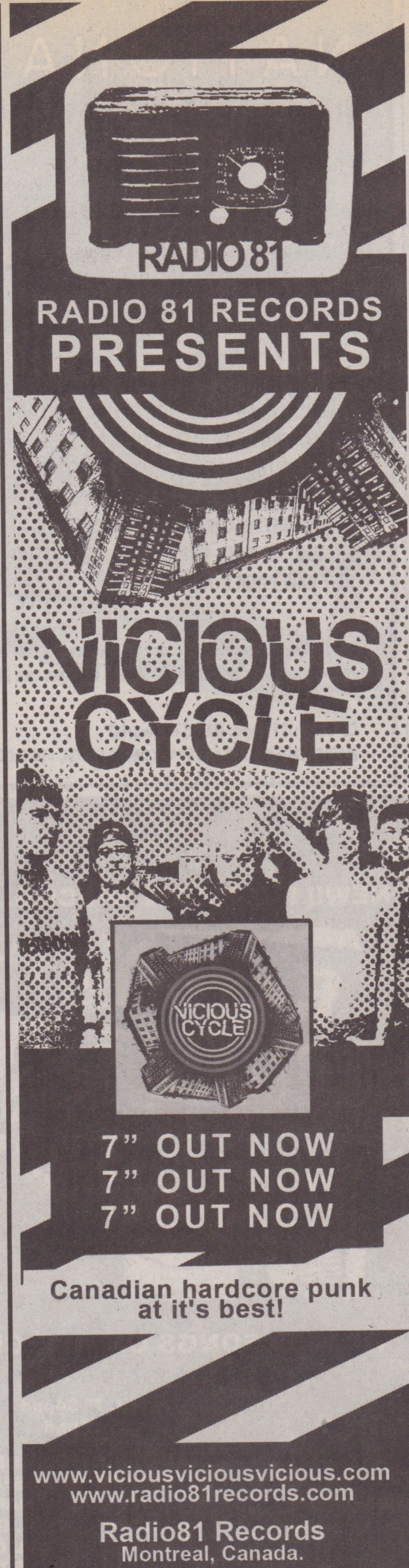

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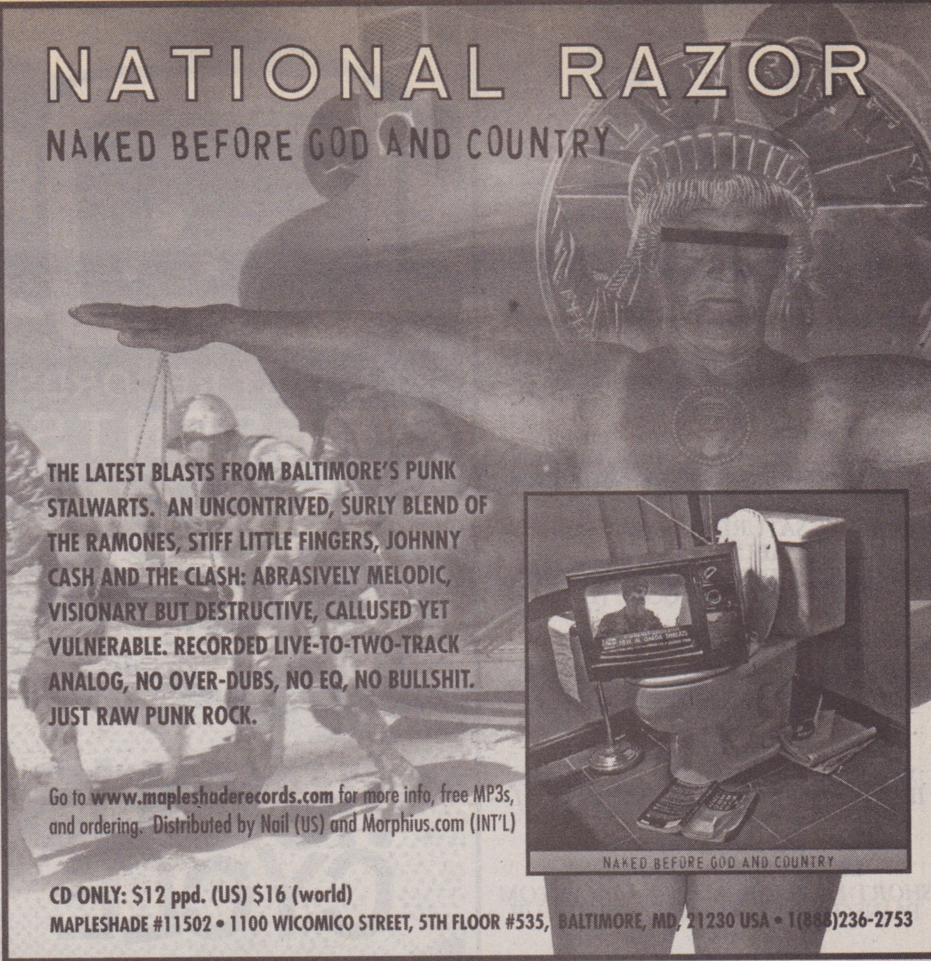

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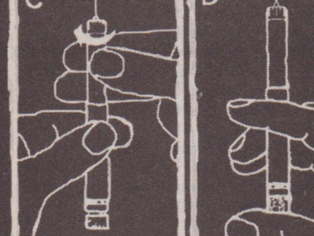

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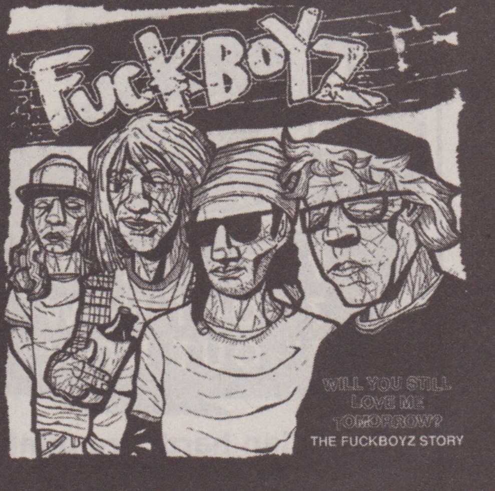
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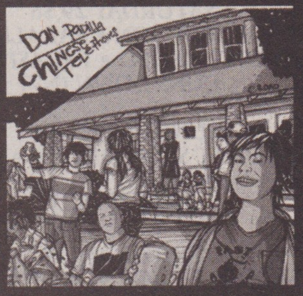

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MRR NEWS

MRR NEWS FOR ISSUE #279 COMPILED BY ARIEL CELESTE & GOLNAR NIKPOUR

REVOLT OF THE PENGUINS: CHILEAN STUDENTS FIGHT BACK

by Frederico Moreno from ZNet

Chile has been overrun by high school students whose mass protests have forced the government to drop planned cuts in education spending. Called "penguins" because of their suit-and-tie uniforms, the students have shaken the foundations of the rigid Chilean social structure, inherited from the bloody dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. Now, the government of President Michelle Bachelet of the Socialist Party, which took office earlier this year, has been forced to retreat.

The last six weeks in Chile have been marked by a strike of over 1 million students; the occupation of up to 1,000 high schools and most of the country's universities; and weekly, sometimes daily, marches.

The movement has also persevered in street battles against Chile's sophisticated repression machine—complete with carabineros (the national police) clad in riot gear and tanks firing water cannons that shoot a mixture of water and tear acid. Students, some as young as 13, fought back with sticks, stones and Molotov cocktails.

The struggle began as a defensive fight—stopping the Bachelet government proposals last March for an increase in the cost of the University Entry Exam (PSU) and a restriction on student transportation passes to two trips per day.

But it has since snowballed into an offensive struggle. The movement now demands free transportation and an end to all fees for the PSU, as well as the elimination of a law (known by its initials LOCE) implementing the privatization of Chile's education system—the last law that Pinochet approved before stepping down.

"The average cost of college is $4,000 a year," explained Rodrigo Olivares, president of the Federation of Students in Solidarity (FESOL), and a member of the committee of 34 students that negotiates with the government. "Only 30 percent of high school students make it to college, and working-class families can't afford their kids' meals and transportation fares. Bachelet says there's no money, but the price of just one of the 17 F-16 jets she bought for the armed forces this year is enough to cover all our demands."

The movement has been organized by the Coordinating Assembly of High School Students (ACES), which formed this year through the merger of the youth organizations of the Communist Party (JC) and Socialist Party (JS) with the independent FESOL.

The ACES is composed of two delegates from each school, and it elects a committee of 34 representatives to negotiate with the government. The democratic character of the ACES has meant active participation of students at the occupations—and made the movement difficult to derail, despite the youth organization of Bachelet's own party being one of the main forces leading it.

The march of the penguins has brought behind it broad layers of Chilean society, including university students, various sections of the working class and most parents. According to opinion polls, 87 percent of the population supports the students.

Weekly marches against Bachelet's initial proposals were met in April with repression and thousands of arrests, which generated anger and sparked an increasingly militant response from students. Under pressure from escalating mobilizations, Bachelet gave up on her proposals but refused to consider the students' further demands.

In May, students at 13 Santiago high schools occupied their schools, waiting for Bachelet to address the issue in her May 21 address to the nation. When Bachelet finished her speech without so much as mentioning it, the occupations spread like wildfire.

On May 29, the Minister of Education, Martín Zilic, called for a meeting with representatives from the high schools. When hundreds showed up, only a select few were allowed into the ministry, and Zilic sent a secretary in his place. "This caused a fury in the movement," said Olivera. "We said we wouldn't sit down until the minister came himself. Now we imposed the conditions, not the government. Plus, all the students that came from across Chile joined the ACES, which became a truly national assembly."

The next two weeks saw the paralysis of Chile's educational system. With close to 1,000 high schools occupied nationwide, university students occupied their own campuses in solidarity with the penguins, and presented their own demands.

There were important marches for three days each week in various regions, which included confrontations with the police and thousands of arrests. In these conditions, the government began negotiations with the ACES' 34-student committee, and found itself in constant retreat, conceding on almost all of the students' demands.

The climax of the penguins' revolt came June 5 with a national strike call by the ACES, which various social and political organizations and unions—most remarkably, the workers of the Ministry of Education—honored. Santiago woke up to street barricades, and thousands of students confronted the police throughout the day and well into the night.

The 15-, 16- and 17-year-old students who lead this movement have become a phenomenon in Chile, embarrassing senators on live televised debates, infuriating news anchors and treating government ministers like kids who don't get it.

Olivares explained how in negotiations with Zilic, "If the minister walked out for a smoke or to go consult with Bachelet, we would stop the meeting. If he wasn't there himself, we wouldn't dialogue. That's how we had the guy those days, from 5 p.m. until midnight. He was entrenched. If we didn't like what he was saying, we would interrupt him: 'Mr. Minister, you can't say that, that is an insult to us, that is not what we are asking for.'"

According to Olivares, "Bachelet's latest offer to the students, while undoubtedly a victory—especially in the radicalization and organization of thousands—is a trick. She gives the PSU and transportation pass free to the poorest four-fifths of students, but privatizes the administration of both services.

"As far as the LOCE, she offers a commission to reform it, with 10 percent student participation, but it's only advisory. The Congress can just ignore whatever it says. The JC and JS leaders are ready to accept this offer if Bachelet gives students 50 percent plus one representation in the commission.

"I think this is a bad maneuver on their part at the behest of their parent parties, because we have the forces on our side and could win the whole of our demands. "For now, the ACES has decided to end the occupations, but maintain the mobilizations to pressure the government. This is fine because the kids were tired and strained. I know the JC and JS want to negotiate and demobilize, but it's going to be hard to quiet all the students who thought they were fighting to eliminate the LOCE."

PHONE TOWER CANCER FEARS

By Adam Morton and David Rood from www.theage.com.au

A spate of brain tumors among staff has forced RMIT University to close part of its business school and test for radiation emissions from rooftop phone towers. As staff reacted with shock, the university yesterday shut the top two floors of the Bourke Street building and ordered more than 100 employees to work from home for the next fortnight.

The closure follows the discovery of five brain tumors in the past month and two others in 1999 and 2001. Two were malignant and five were benign. WorkCover has launched an investigation and RMIT has promised its own inquiry. The academics' union last night expressed concern that the tumors were caused by the communications towers on the roof of the former Tivoli Theatre site.

National Tertiary Education Union state secretary Matthew McGowan warned that anecdotal reports from hastily arranged staff meetings yesterday suggested the number of people affected would grow. "You have to ask some pretty serious questions and we're obviously concerned that it could be linked to the tower," he said. "This would appear to be much more than coincidence and RMIT has a responsibility to leave no stone unturned in seeking the truth."

Five of the seven affected work on the top floor of the 17-story building. All except one have worked in the building for at least a decade. An RMIT academic who did not want to be named said staff—the 16th and 17th floors are home to offices of senior management and lecturers—were "in disbelief, concerned and upset" as they attended meetings and left the building late yesterday.

Medical experts contacted by The Age said no definitive link had been proved between mobile phone tower radiation and cancer. Australian Medical Association president Mukesh Haikerwal said there was no proof of a connection but "if you get clusters of disease it's sensible to investigate."

Dr John Gall, from private health company Southern Medical Services, which has been called in to assess the sick, said last night three of those affected had tumorsshowing symptoms consistent with radiation. But he said there was no causal link with the building based on preliminary observations.

A spokesman for state Health Minister Bronwyn Pike said WorkCover would investigate the matter and the Department of Human Services would provide any expertise needed. RMIT chief operating officer Steve Somogyi said testing was carried out on the building after the first two of the seven tumors were reported in 1999 and 2001. It found radiation and air quality levels within recommended guidelines.

"We value the health and safety of our staff and students very highly. The incidence of illness is disturbing and we shall continue to check for any possible cause connected to the building," Mr Somogyi said.

But RMIT union branch president Jeanette Pierce said the university agreed to shut the two floors only after being pressured by the union. "I'm a bit mystified that the university wasn't planning to vacate and that we had to make the point that they needed to vacate those two floors," she said.

There are more than 160 mobile phone towers in central Melbourne alone. A Telstra spokeswoman said last night the company had two towers at the Tivoli site, but both met health and safety standards and were tested regularly.

"An enormous amount of medical research has been conducted without any substantiated evidence of a link between mobile phone technology and adverse health effects, including cancer," she said.

RMIT management emailed all staff and students late yesterday and said health check-ups and counselling would be made available. About 600 staff work in the building.

Mr McGowan said shutting the two floors should be just the first step. "We think they should be testing all staff who have worked on those levels and not just for tumours. We need to understand what are the health risks that people are suffering," he said.a

ON REPEAT: A NEW REPORT ON IRAQI PRISONER ABUSE

US Military Report Reveals Unauthorized Treatment of Iraqi Detainees
By VOA News; Some information for this report was provided by AP and Reuters.

A US military report says US Special Operation forces subjected some detainees in Iraqi to harsh and unauthorized treatment. The investigation, which detailed incidents in early 2004, found some detainees were held for days in cells so small they were unable to lie down or stand.

They were also subjected to loud music to prevent them from communicating or sleeping. Some detainees were fed only bread and water, including one who was given that diet for 17 days. At least one detainee was kept naked.

The Pentagon released the report Friday to the American Civil Liberties Union, which requested it under the Freedom of Information Act. The report, dated November 2004, said the soldiers violated the spirit of the Geneva Conventions, which govern the treatment of prisoners of war.

The actions were considered wrong but not illegal, and no one was recommended for disciplinary action. The investigation faulted "inadequate policy" guidance for the mistreatment.

Corrective measures, including better training of personnel and new standards for detention centers, were recommended. The investigation, conducted by Army Brigadier General Richard Fromica, was ordered shortly after detainee abuse at the Abu Ghraib prison first surfaced.

MYSPACE: A PLACE FOR THE NSA

Pentagon sets sights on social networking sites
by Paul Marks from www.newscientist.com

"I am continually shocked and appalled at the details people voluntarily post online about themselves." So says Jon Callas, chief security officer at PGP, a Silicon Valley-based maker of encryption software. He is far from alone in noticing that fast-growing social networking websites such as MySpace and Friendster are a snoop's dream.

The Pentagon's National Security Agency, which specializes in eavesdropping and code-breaking, is funding research into the mass harvesting of the information that people post about themselves on social networks. And it could harness advances in internet technology—specifically the forthcoming "semantic web" championed by the web standards organization W3C—to combine data from social networking websites with details such as banking, retail and property records, allowing the NSA to build extensive, all-embracing personal profiles of individuals.

Americans are still reeling from last month's revelations that the NSA has been logging phone calls since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The Congressional Research Service, which advises the US legislature, says phone companies that surrendered call records may have acted illegally. However, the White House insists that the terrorist threat makes existing wire-tapping legislation out of date and is urging Congress not to investigate the NSA's action.

Meanwhile, the NSA is pursuing its plans to tap the web, since phone logs have limited scope. They can only be used to build a very basic picture of someone's contact network, a process sometimes called "connecting the dots." Clusters of people in highly connected groups become apparent, as do people with few connections who appear to be the intermediaries between such groups. The idea is to see by how many links or "degrees" separate people from, say, a member of a blacklisted organization.

By adding online social networking data to its phone analyses, the NSA could connect people at deeper levels, through shared activities, such as taking flying lessons. Typically, online social networking sites ask members to enter details of their immediate and extended circles of friends, whose blogs they might follow. People often list other facets of their personality including political, sexual, entertainment, media, and sporting preferences too. Some go much further, and a few have lost their jobs by publicly describing drinking and drug-taking exploits. Young people have even been barred from the orthodox religious colleges that they are enrolled in for revealing online that they are gay.

"You should always assume anything you write online is stapled to your resumé. People don't realize you get Googled just to get a job interview these days," says Callas.

Other data the NSA could combine with social networking details includes information on purchases, where we go (available from cellphone records, which cite the base station a call came from) and what major financial transactions we make, such as buying a house.

Right now this is difficult to do because today's web is stuffed with data in incompatible formats. Enter the semantic web, which aims to iron out these incompatibilities over the next few years via a common data structure called the Resource Description Framework (RDF). W3C hopes that one day every website will use RDF to give each type of data a unique, predefined, unambiguous tag.

"RDF turns the web into a kind of universal spreadsheet that is readable by computers as well as people," says David de Roure at the University of Southampton in the UK, who is an adviser to W3C. "It means that you will be able to ask a website questions you couldn't ask before, or perform calculations on the data it contains." In a health record, for instance, a heart attack will have the same semantic tag as its more technical description, a myocardial infarction. Previously, they would have looked like separate medical conditions. Each piece of numerical data, such as the rate of inflation or the number of people killed on the roads, will also get a tag.

This ease of use will make prying into people's lives a breeze. No plan to mine social networks via the semantic web has been announced by the NSA, but its interest in the technology is evident in a funding footnote to a research paper delivered at the W3C's WWW2006 conference in Edinburgh, UK, in late May.

That paper, entitled *Semantic Analytics on Social Networks,* by a research team led by Amit Sheth of the University of Georgia in Athens and Anupam Joshi of the University of Maryland in Baltimore reveals how data from online social networks and other databases can be combined to uncover facts about people. The footnote said the work was part-funded by an organization called ARDA.

What is ARDA? It stands for Advanced Research Development Activity. According to a report entitled Data Mining and Homeland Security, published by the Congressional Research Service in January, ARDA's role is to spend NSA money on research that can "solve some of the most critical problems facing the US intelligence community."

The ever-growing online social networks are part of the flood of internet information that could be mined: some of the top sites like MySpace now have more than 80 million members.

The research ARDA funded was designed to see if the semantic web could be easily used to connect people. The research team chose to address a subject close to their academic hearts: detecting conflicts of interest in scientific peer review. Friends cannot peer review each other's research papers, nor can people who have previously co-authored work together.

So the team developed software that combined data from the RDF tags of online social network Friend of a Friend (www.foaf-project.org), where people simply outline who is in their circle of friends, and a semantically tagged commercial bibliographic database called DBLP, which lists the authors of computer science papers.

The technology will work in exactly the same way for intelligence and national security agencies and for financial dealings, such as detecting insider trading, the authors say. Linking "who knows who" with purchasing or bank records could highlight groups of terrorists, money launderers, or blacklisted groups, says Sheth.

Privacy groups worry that "automated intelligence profiling" could sully people's reputations or even lead to miscarriages of justice—especially since the data from social networking sites may often be inaccurate, untrue, or incomplete, De Roure warns.

But Tim Finin, a colleague of Joshi's, thinks the spread of such technology is unstoppable. "Information is getting easier to merge, fuse, and draw inferences from. There is money to be made and control to be gained in doing so. And I don't see much that will stop it," he says.

Callas thinks people have to wise up to how much information about themselves they should divulge on public websites. It may sound obvious, he says, but being discreet is a big part of maintaining privacy. Time, perhaps, to hit the delete button.

WHO SAYS THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN IS OVER?

US-led troops launch largest assault since 2001
From an article in The Guardian UK

An American-led force of 11,000 troops launches the biggest anti-Taliban offensive in Afghanistan since 2001 in mid-June, concentrating their firepower on an area under British control. British, American, Canadian and Afghan troops will sweep across insurgent strongholds in four southern provinces rocked by a wave of Taliban violence in recent months, US officials said.

The ambitious offensive, named Operation Mountain Thrust, aims to cripple the strengthening insurgency before NATO takes command of southern Afghanistan next month. The heaviest combat is expected in the lawless mountains spanning western Uruzgan province and northeastern Helmand, where 3,300 British troops are deploying and Britain suffered its first combat fatality last weekend.

Less intensive operations will target pockets of Kandahar and Zabul provinces. US military officials announcing the operation said reconstruction activities would follow in its wake.

"This is not just about killing or capturing extremists," US spokesman Tom Collins said in Kabul. "We are going to go into these areas, take out the security threat and establish conditions where government forces, government institutions [and] humanitarian organisations can move in and begin the real work."

The British troops will fight alongside 2,300 Americans, 2,200 Canadians and about 3,500 Afghans. The mission will last through the summer and carries a high risk of casualties. On the first days of the offensive, an American soldier was killed and two wounded after the Taliban attacked a patrol in Sangin district of Helmand. The insurgents disabled three American vehicles and pinned the patrol down for the night. The British army airlifted 100 support troops into the area, and a coalition airstrike later killed or wounded 12 insurgents, a spokesman said.

Dilbar Jan Arman, the governor of Zabul, one of the four targeted provinces, said US forces and local leaders had been planning the operation for the past two months. "We will search for the Taliban wherever they are. We seek to disrupt their underground networks. We hope it will be a success," he told the Guardian in the provincial capital, Qalat.

As he spoke, US Black Hawk helicopters circled the town centre and an American armoured convoy rumbled through the streets, but there were no other signs of military activity. The multinational operation starting today is the broadest and most ambitious strike against the Taliban since 2001. Benjamin Freakley, the US major general commanding operations in Afghanistan, said the troops would target Taliban hideouts across the four provinces.

"They'll be in one area, they'll move out of that area, they'll conduct an attack in another area, then move back to a safe haven," he told the Associated Press. "This is our approach to put simultaneous pressure on the enemy's networks, to cause their leaders to make mistakes, and to attack those leaders." A dramatic surge in fighting since mid-May has killed about 550 people, according to US and Afghan military figures. The Taliban has suffered the vast majority of casualties under US and British bombs; at least nine coalition soldiers have also died.

Information about civilian deaths is difficult to obtain due to the inaccessibility of battle sites, but local human rights groups have reported dozens of casualties. Four civilians died in eastern Paktika province yesterday, according to the provincial governor. Afghan officials in Qalat welcomed the offensive against the Taliban, who reportedly killed at least three people in a recent ambush on a police checkpoint. But many also blamed Pakistan for allowing the insurgents to shelter, train and rearm in the lawless tribal areas that run along the Afghan border. "The Taliban is a disease, like typhoid," said Muhammad Hanif, Zabul's director of education. "And the ISI [Pakistan's intelligence agency] is the germ that causes it."

Pakistani officials have repeatedly and angrily denied any collusion with the Taliban, saying it is impossible to control the 900-mile, largely unpatrolled border.

REST IN PEACE: DOMINIK A. GERSZBERG

Born February 4th, 1974. Died June 11th, 2006.

Dominik A. Gerszberg was born in Tomaszów Mazowiecki, Poland. Behind the iron curtain of the '80s, Dominik became introduced to punk and metal through underground labels such as Nikt Nic Nie Wie and bands such as Dezerter and Post-Regiment.

Influenced by music and a dark critique of civilization Dominik began to develop as an artist mostly beginning with pen and ink.

In January of 1990 Dominik moved to Chicago, Illinois. He became involved with the large Polish punk scene there, and briefly sang for the Polish punk band Beer Goggles.

In 1992 he moved to Fort Walton Beach, Florida where he met the band Lesser Of Two. In the years that followed he did artwork for most of their albums, flyers, and other propaganda. He also toured with Lesser Of Two in the USA, Canada, Europe, and Mexico. He booked shows in Eastern Europe including nine shows in Poland and four shows with Post Regiment. Although he did not play an instrument in Lesser Of Two he was considered a member of the band due to his contributions as an artist and friend.

In 1997, Dominik and Lesser Of Two moved to Oakland, California where his art began to extend further into the punk scene. He did artwork for the bands Desolation, Born Dead, Endrophobia, and others. He was also known for flyer art in the Bay Area for shows at venues including 924 Gilman and Burnt Ramen.

Over the years his artwork had expanded from pen and ink to include sculpture, painting, framing, and mixed media. Although in his lifetime he never organized an art show his artwork was displayed July 3, 2006 at the Golden Bull at 412 14th Street, Oakland, California.

THE POLICE IN MEXICO SUCK TOO

Police Terrorize San Salvador Atenco, At least 2 Dead, 50 Injured, More than 200 Jailed

From an article by Mary Ann Tenuto-Sanchez

The conflict began in early, May, when flower vendors from San Salvador Atenco attempted to sell flowers in the nearby community of Texcoco at the site of a planned WalMart megamall. Police brutally displaced the vendors, beating many people in the process. In response, the Atenco-based Peoples Front in Defense of Land (FPDT, for its initials in Spanish) mobilized protests, which were brutally repressed by police. News reports indicate police killed at least two Atenco residents, including a 14-year-old boy, and at least 50 or more are injured, some of them critically. Eleven police were detained by Atenco residents who demanded an end to the repression and the release of prisoners in exchange for the release of the detained police. Instead of negotiating an exchange, the Federal Preventative Police (antiriot police) entered Atenco during the early morning hours declared a state of siege, and began a house-to-house search for the detained police, severely beating and arresting Atenco residents.

The bloody results of this police terror was: 275 people held in a jail or a hospital (Enlace Zapatista report). This includes women and children of different ages. Several are still considered disappeared or unaccounted for. At least five are chained to hospital beds as prisoners. An autopsy revealed that the 14 year-old boy was shot by the police. Another Atenco resident died after police cracked his head open. Many of the leaders of the FPDT were arrested when police searched their homes without warrants, directed by a masked informant. Townspeople recognized the informant's voice as he directed police. Three of the top leaders of the FPDT are in a maximum security prison, charged with kidnapping.

Five foreign citizens were deported from Mexico, at least three of them women. They told stories of police sexual abuse and rape of detained women. Twenty four women have now filed complaints with Mexico's National Human Rights Commission.

La Jornada reported that 172 people have been formally charged and will stand trial. However, the judge threw out the original charge of conspiracy, a very serious charge that would prevent them from being released on bond. Now, 144 people are charged with attacks on roads, a lesser offense for which they can bail out if they can come up with approximately 24 thousand pesos (around $2,000 dollars). Charges against another 17 were completely dismissed. However, 28 remain in prison charged with kidnapping for the detention of police, including the FPDT leaders Ignacio del Valle, his son César del Valle and Felipe Alvarez.

Zapatistas Declare Red Alert: Marcos Changes Plans

San Salvador Atenco is an autonomous (self-governing) community a little to the east of Mexico City and is an adherent to the Other Campaign. Just one week before the police rampage, Subcomandante Marcos entered Atenco on horseback as part of the Other Campaign's tour. He received a tumultuous welcome, as residents pledged to assist the Other Campaign with the strength of their numbers.

Upon learning of the police-initiated disturbances, the Zapatistas suspended the Other Campaign's schedule of events, declared a Red Alert throughout their Chiapas communities, and called on adherents of the Other Campaign to mobilize in support of Atenco residents. This means that the published schedule for the Other Campaign has been superseded by the emergency in Atenco. Subcomandante Marcos said he will remain in Mexico City until all the Atenco prisoners are released. In other words, the Zapatistas take the attack on Atenco as a direct attack against the Other Campaign!

Subcomandante Marcos called for peaceful protests, including blocking roads, marches and educational forums. Marcos himself led a march from Mexico City to Atenco. During his appearance in Atenco, he lashed out at the misrepresentation of events by Mexico's corporate media. (A NarcoNews report identifies deliberate misrepresentation by two Los Angeles Times reporters.)

"Pay Back"

It appears that the police were just waiting for the right excuse and the okay from above to smash San Salvador Atenco, in particular the FPDT. Its recent history provides a clue to the motive for the excessive police violence against a campesino (peasant farmer) population.

The community learned that 70% of its land had been expropriated by the federal government of Vicente Fox Quesada in order to build a new international airport complex in Texcoco. In response, it formed the FPDT to oppose the Fox administration's plan to build the airport on their communally owned lands. After a year of vigorous protests, remembered around the world for the sound of their machetes clanging together in Mexico City's Zócalo, the government canceled its plans, much to the dismay of anxious investors. The community has remained highly organized ever since. Atenco is famous for its militant, machete wielding protesters who now participate in popular mobilizations across central Mexico, including those protesting a WalMart store near the archaeological site of Teotihuacán (close to Atenco). For the past week, members of the FPDT accompanied the Other Campaign during its travels through the state of Mexico and also in Mexico City on May 1, providing security for Subcomandante Marcos.

Those who had planned to invest in the multiple properties belonging to the airport complex were extremely upset by the government's decision to cancel the airport and the expropriation of land once claimed by eminent domain. This was to be a multibillion dollar project and a key piece of infrastructure needed to support expanded "free trade." The Fox government was severely criticized as being "weak." The impression that most Mexicans and internationals had was that Atenco's residents had backed the federal government down. Many analysts think that the excessive police brutality was "pay back" for the 2002 victory, the FPDT's continued militance and its important role in the Other Campaign.

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WHERE ARE MULDER & SCULLY WHEN YOU NEED THEM?

Secretive, powerful Bilderberg group meets near Ottawa

By Alexander Panetta from Canadian Press

It's like Woodstock for conspiracy theorists. A serene suburban setting has been transformed into a four-day festival of black suits, black limousines, burly security guards — and suspicions of world domination.

On the outskirts of the nation's capital, a tony high-rise hotel beside a golf course is hosting the annual meeting for one of the world's most secretive and powerful societies.

It's not the Freemasons. Forget those fabled US military men who tucked away UFOs in the Arizona desert. These guys, you've probably never even heard of, and if you believe the camera-toting followers who attend all their meetings, they control the world. They're called the Bilderberg group. They include European royalty, national leaders, political power-brokers, and heads of the world's biggest companies. Those who follow the Bilderberg group say it got Europe to adopt a common currency, got Bill Clinton elected after he agreed to support NAFTA, and is spending this week deciding what to do about high oil prices and that pesky fundamentalist president of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

"Some people say that I advocate a conspiracy theory. That's not true. I recognize a conspiracy fact," said James P. Tucker. The 74-year-old American journalist has been following the Bilderberg group for decades, has written extensively about it, and recently published his Bilderberg Diary. He follows the group to its annual meetings and stands outside describing to other journalists details of his privileged access to their inner workings. He is not alone.

Daniel Estulin snapped photographs of every vehicle that approached the concrete-and-glass complex Thursday. He says Mossad—Israel's spy agency—is paying attention. Away from the golf course, there are no grassy knolls in the industrial zone outside Ottawa's Brookstreet hotel, the site of this week's meeting, but the scene does nothing to dissuade conspiracists.

Ottawa police officers are standing guard outside a dozen metal gates that serve as security checkpoints a half-kilometre from the hotel. But Ottawa's finest are clearly not in charge here.

To approach the hotel property, even these uniformed police officers are required to show their credentials to the half-dozen black-suited men working for Globe Risk, a private security firm.

"This is pretty unusual," one Ottawa cop said.

Another said they were hired to be there in their off-duty hours and weren't told much by their superiors: "They just told us, 'These are important people. It's a private meeting.' "

A small crowd of curious onlookers snapped photos of black-windowed sedans stopping at the checkpoints. It was impossible to see who was sit ting inside. But it's fun to imagine.

The Bilderberg group is a half-century-old organization comprising about 130 of the world's wealthiest and most powerful people. The group is named after the Dutch hotel where it held its first meeting in 1954.

But don't expect to find that information on the group's website. They don't have a website. Nor was there any Bilderberg logo anywhere to be seen Thursday, except for those nondescript white placards stamped with the letter "B" and tucked under the windshield of all those tinted sedans.

A journalist calling the Brookstreet hotel asked to leave a message for the Bilderbergers. "Sure," a hotel employee said. "Your name and number?" The journalist then asked whether the employee could confirm whether the Bilderberg Group was actually meeting there. "I don't know," she replied.

Even members of the hotel gym were barred from the premises. A sign was slapped on the gym door earlier this week informing them the facilities would be closed for four days. All other hotel guests were asked to check out by Thursday morning. Any vehicles remaining in the parking lot would be towed.

Bilderberg says the privacy of its meetings helps encourage freewheeling discussion. An unsigned press release, sent by fax, confirmed this year's meeting would deal with energy issues, Iran, the Middle East, terrorism, immigration, Russia, European-American relations and Asia.

"The meeting is private to encourage frank and open discussion," said the release. "There will be no press conference." The release included a list of participants at this year's event.

The 2006 group includes David Rockefeller, Henry Kissinger, Queen Beatrix of Holland, New York Gov. George Pataki, the heads of Coca-Cola, Credit Suisse, the Royal Bank of Canada, cabinet ministers from Spain and Greece, and a number of media moguls, including Globe and Mail newspaper publisher Philip Crawley. However, Bilderberg followers say that media moguls whose outlets report leaked details from the meetings will see themselves banned in the future.

The group also includes a pair of prominent figures involved in planning the U.S. invasion of Iraq—Richard Perle and Ahmad Chalabi. Fellow White House power-players Donald Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz, now head of the World Bank, have spoken to the group in the past.

But Bilderberg is not exclusively a right-wing body, by any means. Bill Clinton's right-hand-man Vernon Jordan, was also in attendance Thursday, as was his Mideast negotiator Dennis Ross.

The prime ministers of Britain and Canada—Tony Blair and Stephen Harper—have addressed the group before, as have former Liberal prime ministers Pierre Trudeau, Paul Martin and Jean Chrétien.

ISRAELI MISSILE HITS GAZA BUILDING

From www.aljazeera.net

An Israeli helicopter fired a missile, which damaged a building in the northern Gaza Strip early on Tuesday, June 20th, witnesses and the Israeli military said.

There were no reported casualties from the attack an Israeli army spokeswoman described as against a weapons manufacturing plant used by Hamas resistance fighters to produce rockets fired at Israel. Palestinian sources described the building damaged in the blast as a metal foundry.

The attack followed continued rocket fire on the Jewish state by Gaza fighters on Monday. Israel has stepped up air raids against Palestinian fighters in response to increased rocket fire recently that has mainly targetted the southern Israeli town of Sderot. Sderot is the hometown of Amir Peretz, the Israeli defence minister.

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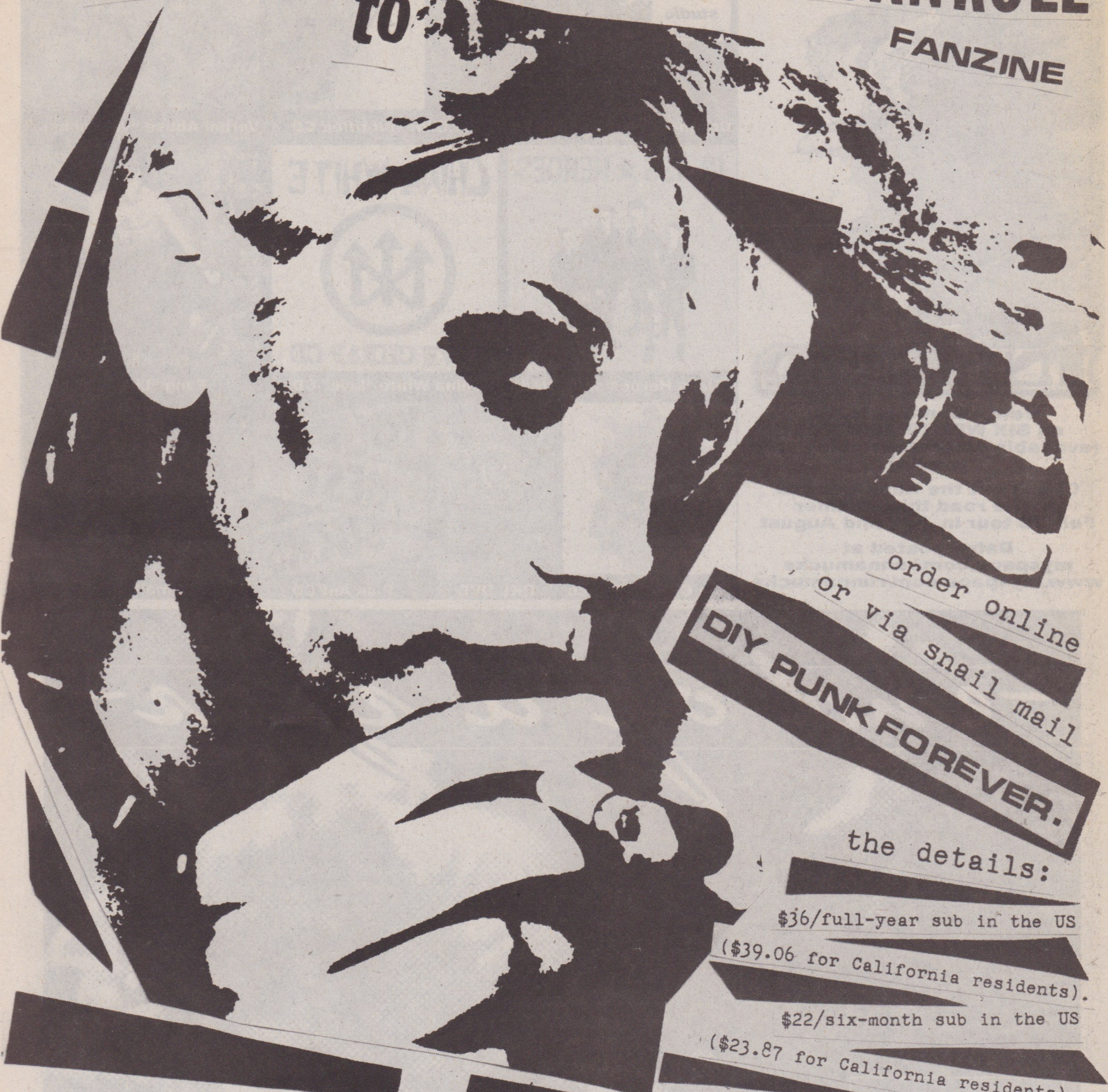

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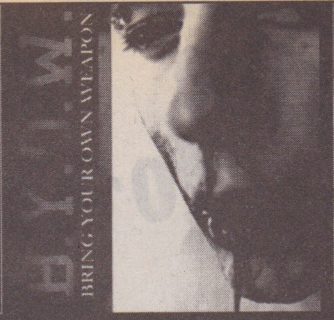
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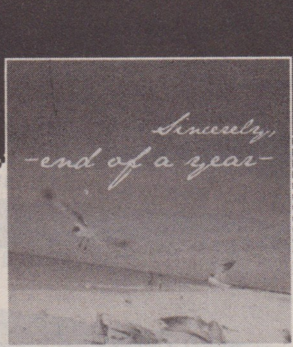
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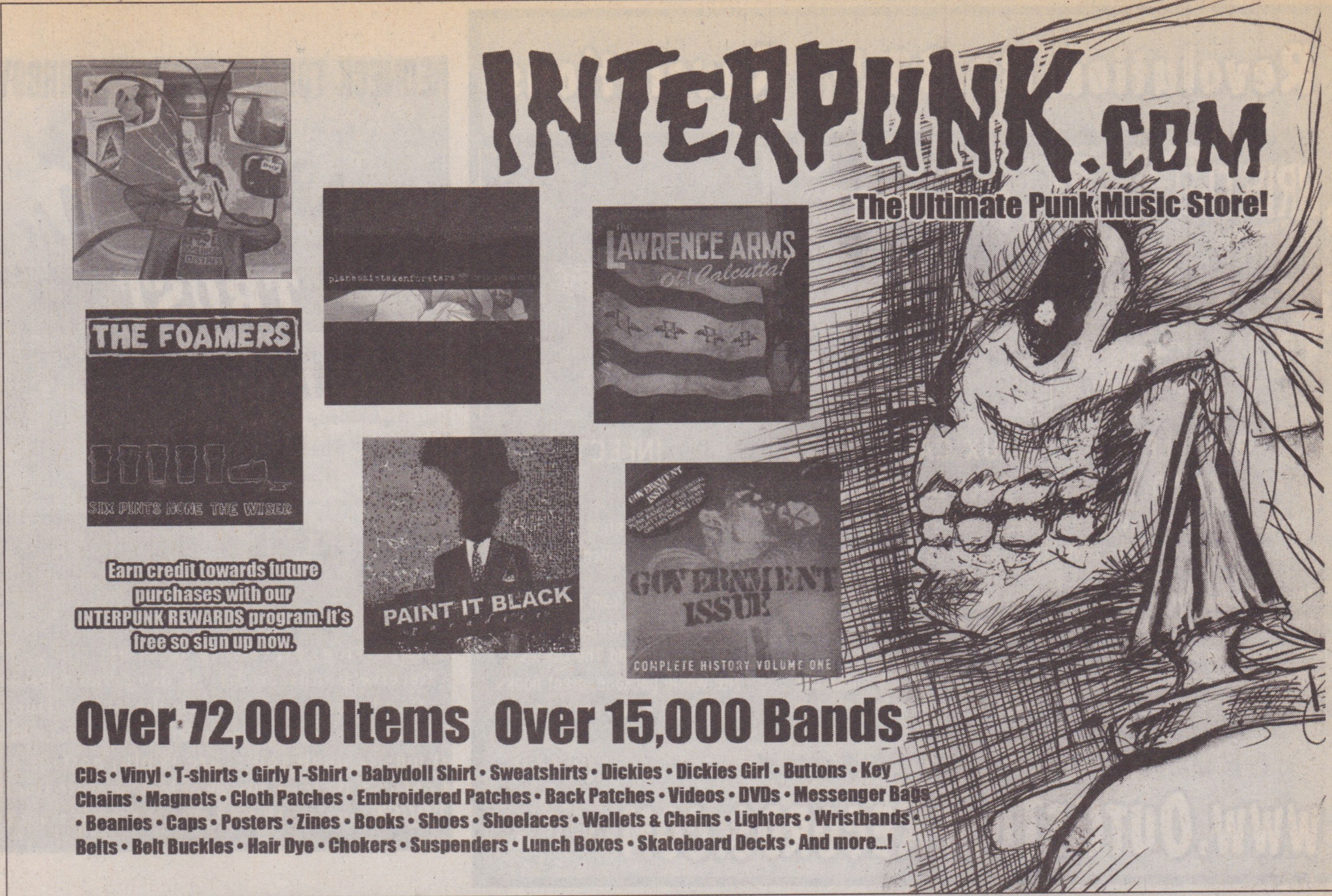
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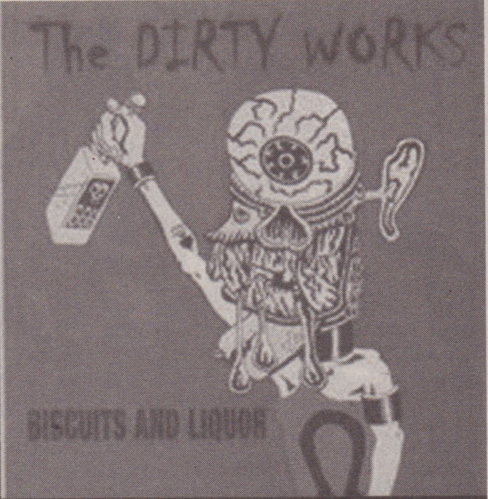
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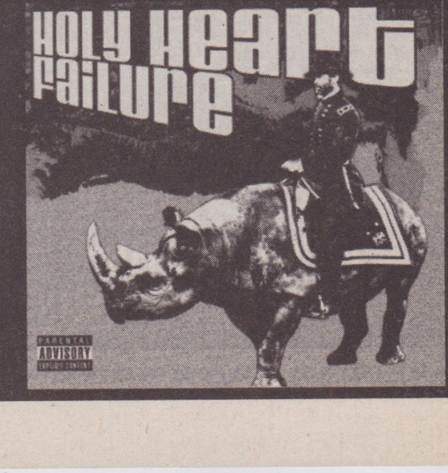
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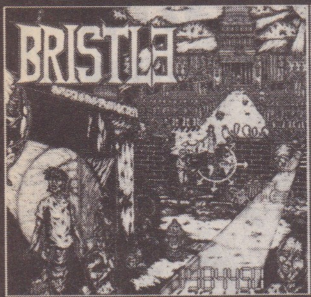

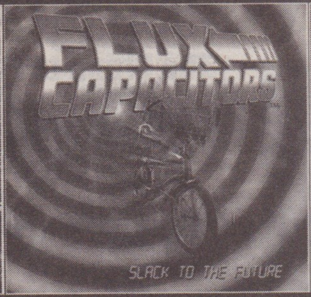

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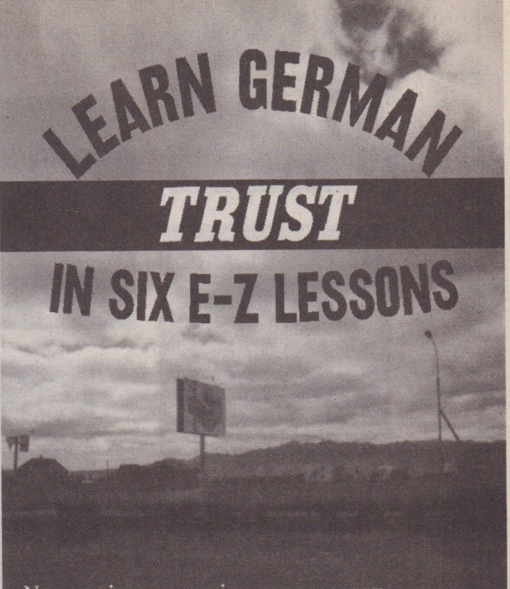

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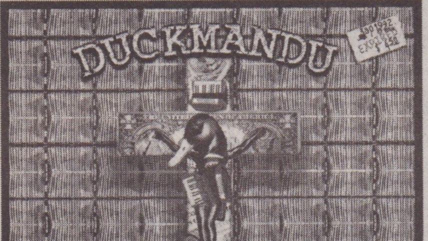

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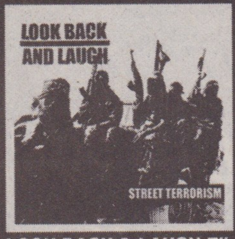

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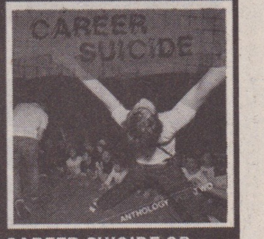

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PUNK ROCK IN TAJIKISTAN AND UZBEKISTAN: TWO SCENE REPORTS

BY LÜK HAAS

TAJIKISTAN:

Background

Punk in Tajikistan! Even the most informed of my Russian friends doubted there would be any bands in the poorest of all former Soviet republics. Squeezed between Afghanistan, China and Uzbekistan, the country is officially over 90% mountainous terrains, and we're not talking green rolling hills. We're talking the *Pamirs*, the Western end of the Himalaya chain, several peaks over 7000m, and villages residing at altitudes between 3000 and 4000m, where summer is a couple of months a year without frost. Life is tough in Tajikistan. The country went through a devastating seven-year civil war after the collapse of the USSR, when local *apparatchiks* suddenly turned warlords and fought for power. Because of the war, much of the musicians and many other people left the country, emigrating to Russia, Kazakhstan, and other places. Now the country is on the way to recovery, but it will take many more years until the situation can be considered *normal*. The national language of Tajikistan is Tajik, a Persian dialect, but there are also a lot of minorities here, as in most former Soviet republics: Russians (those who did not leave during the war), Uzbeks (in the North and West), Kyrgyzs (in the North East and Eastern Pamir), Koreans, Germans, Tatars, and Pamiri. (In the Western Badakhshan high valleys, they speak a bouquet of local languages, like Shugni, Bakhtangi, and more.)

Music

Punk was introduced to Tajikistan during the Soviet era, with ZVUKOVAYA ARTYEL ("The Sound Cooperative") being the first band. ZA was formed by Kide, one of the fellows gravitating around the then Dushanbe rock club. Like in every major Soviet city, Dushanbe had its own *rock club*, a space where musicians could gather, rehearse, and play. ZA was formed in the late '80s, and played for a few years, including during wartime, until most guys left for Russia, apart from Kide. They were of course heavily influenced by Soviet rock of that time. The rock club disappeared after Tajikistan's independence in 1991. Another band of that era was the rock band formed in Khorog, in the Badakhshan Pamir region, by Samandar, a local musician. The band even managed to play a gig during the fighting in 1994, and they had all their songs in local Shugni language! Samandar is still playing these days but different projects. He came back from a few months in Berlin last year and is now trying a fusion of punk and Sufi tradition (traditional religious Pamiri music). Contact him at: Samandar Pulodov / Shirinsho Shotemur St. 131 apt. 36 / Khorog 736001 /Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast / Tajikistan. sam-music@yandex.ru. Kide is also still playing in Dushanbe, mostly acoustic solo compositions, even though he still keeps formally a band under the name KIDE AND THE JEANS COMMUNITY. ZA and Kide & the JC have a lot of albums, but everything is home-made so if you want it, you have to ask him to burn you a CD. Contact: kitkide@hotmail.com.

There is a great young punk band playing in Dushanbe since 2004, they are called ZLO ("Evil"). ZLO is the brainchild of Lucifer, a.k.a. Jack Rock, who is for sure going to enter the legend of Tajik punk! He started playing in middle high school, with his first band, X. He then formed his second band, NOCH ("The Night"), in high school, and now that he is attending university, he is composing for ZLO, and trying to keep the band together, as punk is NOT popular in Tajikistan, he has a high turn-over rate of musicians. It is most difficult is to keep a drummer! The band is totally grassroots and has to borrow a bass and drum set when they want to play. They can't afford paying for rehearsal space, so they do it at home in their parents' flat, on acoustic guitars, and drumming on a chair! The band is influenced by a lot of music from Kino to Siberian punk. Contact: Evgeny Kalinin / Gafurov St. 8/1 apt. 8 / Dushanbe 734064 / Tajikistan. steffy86@mail.ru.

RAGNAROCK is the leading thrash-metal/punk band currently in Dushanbe. It is made up of students from the Russian-Tajik Slavonic University. They are very friendly guys! Contact: Daler Ismailov / Ul. Akhmadi Donish 17/1 apt. 12 / Dushanbe 734024 / Tajikistan. mansur@tajik.net, or mansurdaler@yahoo.com.

JINN is the older running hard rock/metal band, good guys, and they already have recorded two albums. Two of them (drummer and vocalist/guitarist) are actually pilots for the national airline, Tajik Air!

IEROGLIF started as a punk/alternative band, but nowadays is more into RHCP kind of stuff! You can reach them through RAGNAROCK contact.

ZAPADNI KVARTAL (Western Block) was a rock/punk band, but they have split up.

TRUSH-OBA (Slum) was a punk band from Khodjent, the former Leninabad in the North of the country. Well, actually they were from Chkalovsk, a suburb of Leninabad, a former *forbidden city* of the USSR, where secret nuclear processing plants were located. Nowadays it's known as a dangerous nuclear damp, where piles of rotting containers of nuclear waste are slowly disintegrating! TRUSH-OBA has split up for the time being, after their former vocalist, Bakhtyor, tried a stint as vocalist for RAGNAROCK in Dushanbe, then abruptly left for Moscow. He says they are going to reform in Moscow—who? Contact: cobain1967-1994@rambler.ru

PAREM is a local rock band, with lyrics in Tajik and influences in local music. They are a bit soft for my taste but popular at Tajik weddings! Olim, the main guy, is also running a home studio. Another important figure of the Tajik scene is Zurab Kokoev, a sound engineer who used to work at the studio of Kohi Borbad, the main concert hall in Dushanbe. He is these days running his own private studio and records local bands and musicians. He knows everything about Tajik rock history!

SQUAL is a local rock/metal band, but the guitarist mostly plays at bars and restaurant mainstream fare and disco to pay his bills. If pushed hard enough by the audience he will dive into the craziest metal solos this side of the Urals.

ULTRAMARINE, the only Tajik band on Myspace, is maybe not worth mentioning. A bunch of rich kids with fashionable clothes and expensive guitars, they talk a lot but I have never seen or heard them play! I think they just try to look cool to succeed with girls. Last time I talked to them they were pretending to be playing nu-metal…whatever.

There is rumored to be a band also in Kurgan-Tyube in the south of the country, with songs in Tajik, but I could not meet them or learn more on this.

Several bands rehearse in a former army compound in Dushanbe, it belongs now to the Ministry of Culture, and they charge a small fee for each room. The building is more or less in ruins, but still, it's better than nothing! Concerts are *very* hard to organize, and usually only a few people will attend. There is no real place for rock. Maybe an open air festival once a year at Bactria cultural center, or a cellar gig organized by some NGO like the Aga Khan Foundation. *Teatralni* Restaurant located in the National Tajik theatre (first floor), used to have an open stage once per month for bands, but it did not draw customers, so they stopped it and now have a variety show-cum-karaoke. *Argh.*

Tajikistan is not a rock country and local airwaves and music shops are dominated by Russian disco and local Tajik *turbofolk*, or bad rap. Tian An Men 89 Records, my label, is preparing to release the first Tajik underground compilation LP ever, it should be out when you read these lines! As usual it will be limited to 500 copies, and will feature the best of the bands I talked about here! Check my website at www.geocities.com/tam89rds for more details. There will be also an Uzbek punk comp LP released at the same time! Take care, and thanks to MRR for the space!

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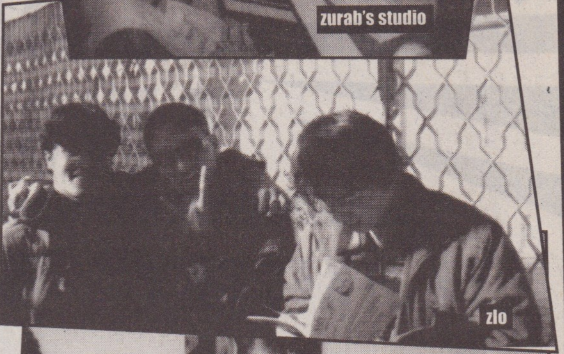

zlo

ragnarock

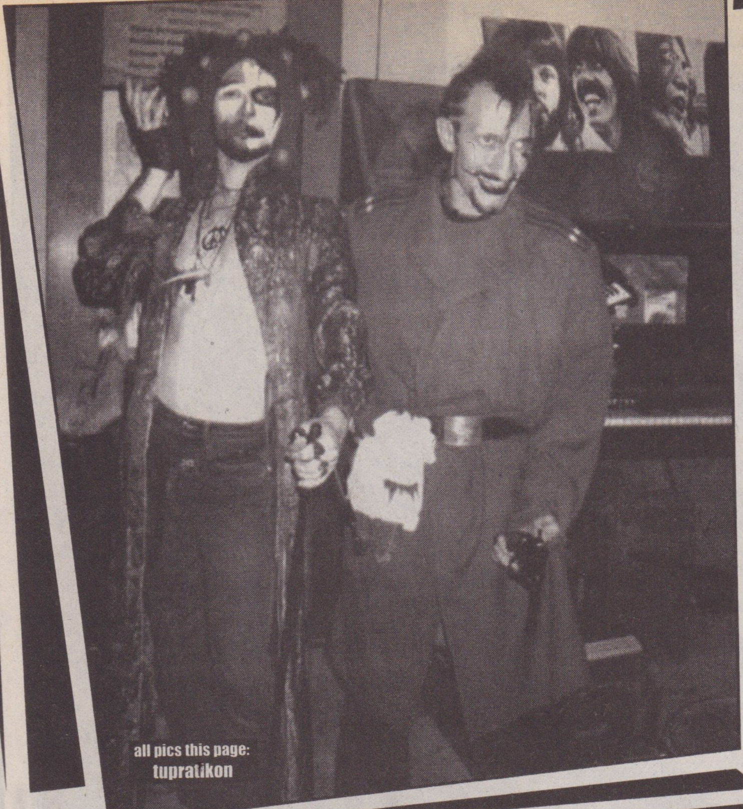
UZBEKISTAN:

Punks and fans of underground music are quite numerous in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, but occasions to play are few, as there is a curfew on public events in the city these days. The government does not really encourage independent events. There used to be the Tequila club, but I heard they stopped having gigs. I was lucky enough to attend a gig in September 2005, where good bands like COLOURS and SLEZY SOLNTSA ("Tears of the Sun") played.

Tashkent is a very large city, and if you spend a couple of days, the only punks you may meet are those playing on acoustic guitars in the metro and underground passageways, panhandling for change. The scene is also unfortunately divided into several cliques, while they should unite to achieve things, but anyway. I came across an Uzbek punk the first time a few years ago when I got a letter from Anvar Kalandarov, who was doing a zine and trying to form a few bands, like HARDCORE-OPA, a semi joke project with lyrics in Uzbek. Anvar was also running a small cassette label and had distributed demos of RED-AKTSIYA (left wing street punk), SKISSERZ (punk and other stuffs), and SUCHIY POTROKH (punk). All these bands have allegedly split up now, but check with Anvar, you never know. Anvar is these days working at a local radio station, and probably working on another noise/industrial project, as usual! Contact: Anvar Kalandarov / Dustlik 6-35 / Poselok Ulugbek / 702132 Tashkent / Uzbekistan. stereotyp@mail.ru.

TUPRATIKON is a punk/art band that is extremely active—playing gigs, doing theater, glass sculpture, etc. Fantastic guys! They can also link you with other Tashkent punk bands like SLEZY SOLNTSA, BROGEN BOGEN, and BGmoltsy i GrObovyerzhtsy (very experimetnal/dark stuff). Contact: xyn1@yandex.ru (Askar), dzenbudd@yandex.ru, painless@yandex.ru (Nina). You can also check www.harddays.net and http://uzrock.net for more info on the Uzbek underground scene, as there are also bands in other cities.

Tian An Men 89 Records will release *Paxta-Core*, the first Uzbek punk compilation LP ever in July 2006. It should be out when you read these lines. Check www.geocities.com/tam89rds for more info. Thanks for caring, Lük Haas.



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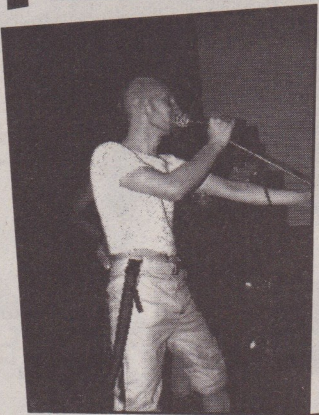


SWEDEN SCENE: UMEÅ

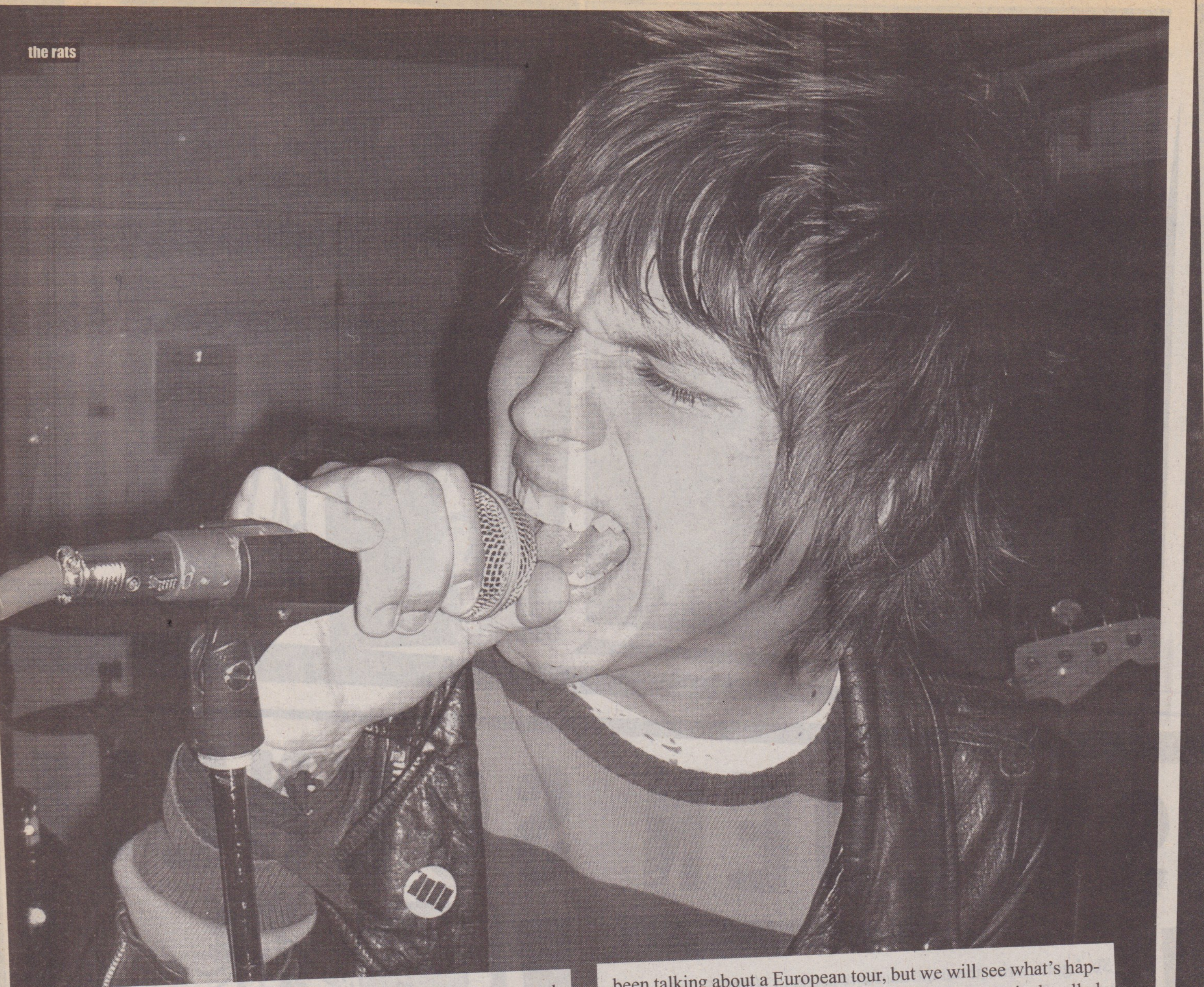
So, I gotta write about the hardcore scene in Umeå, Sweden. Some of you reading this might have stopped by on tour or travelled here, some of you maybe heard about the new bands coming out of here, but most of you probably think about straightedge, veganism and of course REFUSED when you hear about our town. At least that's what most people ask about when I trade tapes with them. Let me start off by saying that things have changed quite a bit during the last couple of years.

Umeå is a city located far in the north of Sweden with about 110, 000 inhabitants. The closest city with a punk-scene is located about 300 km north from here, Luleå. If you go south the closest cities with local punk-scenes are Sandviken and Uppsala—both around 600 km from Umeå.

As I said Umeå is well known for its vegan, straight edge HC scene, which gained momentum back in the '90s with labels like Desperate Fight Records, and bands like REFUSED, FINAL EXIT, ABHINANDA and many more. However, it's now a much different scene. In 2002, at the sixth Punkfest, both D.S-13 and ExTxA played there last Umeå shows, and that was the end of Umeå bands that have released records and toured the world. For a period of time the scene was quite small but we still had at least one gig per week throughout 2003 and 2004, thanks to Kaj who lent a big effort to keep the local scene alive. In recent years more bands began to come around and release more material. Bands like REGULATIONS (ex-ExTxA), RABID GRANNIES (now known as THE RATS), AMBULANCE, AUKTION, REIGN OF BOMBS and PERSONKRETS 3:1 began playing local shows, releasing records and touring, mostly in Europe.

Sweden
Volvo

Well, that's a short history for you about what has been going on. Now I'm gonna tell you about what's going on these days. I have to say that I love living in Umeå and I think our scene is better than it has been in many, many years. The straightedge scene is pretty non-existent—not a single band and almost no one. I don't know if that's a positive thing for all, but for me I think it is. The attitude is friendlier than a couple of years back when I was a young punk, drinkin' outside gigs. I think the people involved now understand the kids better and try to help them get into the scene and have fun. But enough of that. I'll start by telling you about some of the local bands.



the rats

REGULATIONS you have probably heard of. They have toured the US, Europe, and have played many Scandinavian gigs. Some months ago they realesed the *Electric Guitar* LP on Havoc Records in the US, and recently Wasted Sounds released a European pressing. For those who did not know this is ex-ETA and DEAD ONES, and they play great, '70s, US, west coast punk/HC. Really energetic and amazing.

INSURGENT KID is probably the latest Umeå band to break new ice. This is fantastic HC-punk heavily influenced by DS-13. Members of DICK CHENEY, AMBULANCE, DS-13, ABHINANDA, and more. They toured China in March and are planning a European tour soon. They will have an LP/CD out on Wasted Sounds called *Paranoia*. I think this is a band you will hear about a lot for the next couple of years.

DICK CHENEY plays fast, old school punk rock/HC. They have released a couple of 7"s and toured Europe last autumn. If you heard the rumor about a guy who got a guitar in his eye when they were playing in Spain, it was the singer of this band. He is okay now but must wear glasses. Punk rock!

PERSONKRETS 3:1 plays crusty, d-beat, now with less melodic emo parts then they once did. They have recorded an LP that will be released by Yellow Dog soon, I think. Steve from VISIONS OF WAR is drawing the cover and it looks awsome. I know they have been talking about a European tour, but we will see what's happening with that. You can also check out there ten-inch called *Life Is Beautiful* realesed on Halvfabrikat Records.

AMBULANCE may not be a Umeå-band anymore because only two of the five members still live here, but until another moves away I will continue to say that they are a Umeå-band. AMBULANCE plays metallic, melodic crust like ARTIMUS PYLE and FROM ASHES RISE. Skitsylen from HUMAN WASTE/UNCLE CHARLES has taken over the vocals from Sofie and they just realesed a new seven-inch called *Dawn Of A New Beginning* on Civilization Records and Wasted Sounds.

Everyone loves the charming, snotty, Swedish '70s/'80s punk rock band, TRISTESS. They sound like GRISEN SKRIKER, EBBA GRÖN, MISSBRUKARNA, and other great Swedish punk bands from the late '70s and early '80s. They have a great LP/CD called *Vad Ska Vi Bli?* that everybody must own. Right now a new 7" is coming back from the pressing-plants. It will be released on Kick n' Punch Records, and an LP/CD by Wasted Sounds. If you wanna see them live, take your chance at K-town Festival this summer. This is maybe the best live act I've seen in many many years.

KNUGEN FALLER has made many toplists in *Maximum Rocknroll*, and I think they are the current Swedish band that has received the most attention in the US. KNUGEN FALLER

the vicious

simply does almost the same thing as TRISTESS but with a little pop-edge and female vocals. They have realesed two really good 7"s and I think everybody is now eagerly waiting for the full-length. I think they are getting really big in Sweden and I hope they can manage to stick around the DIY scene and maintain DIY ethics. We'll see what happens. I know Feral Ward is re-releasing their stuff in the US now. Pick it up and listen for yourself. I think you will like it. Check Wasted Sounds for European pressings.

I can honestly say that I did not care much from them from the start, but now, VICIOUS is really moving forward. "Suicidal Generation" is a great song but I did not care much for the LP. Then I heard the new recordings, *whoa*. It sounds realy amazing and last time I saw them live at the LKPG Hardcorefest they were great. I think this band with members of other great bands will become much more interesting in the near future. Look out for another Umeå punk rock attack. You can find there realeses on Wasted Sounds or go watch them on their European tour and the K-town Festival this summer. I think they will be doing a US tour soon.

AUKTION is my band. We play a mix of classic Swedish hardcore, d-beat with lots of rock 'n' roll influences along the lines of SKID ROW, AC/DC, GUN'S N ROSES, and more. It's in the same vein of RnR-HC acts as DISFEAR, UNCURBED, SKITKIDS and MOTÖRBREATH. We have a CD/LP out on Wasted Sounds and Assel Records but the CD is currently sold out. There will be more but it'll take a while.This summer we are doing a European tour, and this autumn we will release a new seven-inch EP called *Krossa Nyliberalismen*. It will be released in both the US and in Europe. More info is coming.

DISCONVENIENCE is a snotty, female-fronted US-punkrock sounding band. Truly amazing, and I think they have developed the most out of the local bands in the last few years in Umeå. Today they finished recording their first LP/CD and I'm really looking forward to hearing it. They toured Scandinavia about two to there weeks ago and are now heading out for their second European tour later this summer. The new LP will be out for that, I think, but in case you wanna hear them there is a seven-inch out on Limdimma Rec and Wasted Sounds. Try to go see them live if you can!

THE RATS, formally known as Rabid Grannies, has changed there style quite a few times now. They started out as some kind of käng/d-beat HC on their first seven-inch called *My Brain Is Rotten*, then developed into thrash-HC, and now after the name-change I think they sound like a great mix of TEAR IT UP, DS-13 and US, West Coast, punk rock. They are releasing a new seven-inch on Trashbastard Rec soon and it sounds *fukkin'* awsome. They are planning there second European tour in August, I think. If you get the chance, go and see them. Probably the best live, HC show you'll see in many years. All the kids dance when they play in Umeå.

KOMMUNEN is a new, upcoming *punk-rock-attack* from Umeå with members of DISCONVENIENCE, RABID GRANNIES, and AUKTION, playing early '80s Swedish punk in the vein of bands like KSMB and EBBA GRÖN. They have only done a few shows and recorded a demo, but I think this is going to be something great.

Okay, that pretty much raps up all the bands from Umeå that in some way are active, releasing records, touring or doing other stuff. There are some more upcoming bands too but I chose to not talk about them. Maybe next time. Instead I'm gonna talk about what's going on around the punk scene in Umeå.

In late autumn every year we have our festival called Punkfest. This year it will happen for the ninth time. Bands like DISCHARGE, DISFEAR, DS-13, ETA, CATHETER, WOJCZECH, VITAMIN X, ARSEDESTROYER, and THE HIVES have played the festival, and I think we will have an amazing line-up this year again. Besides that we are trying to organize a second Umeå hardcorefest soon. That's our local band festival with cheap entrance to display what's happening in the punk scene in Umeå.

Until some months ago we had Sweden's biggest distro in Umeå called Wasted Sounds, but Kaj who runs it moved to Linköping (southern-Sweden) in January of this year, and took the distro with him. Wasted Sounds is also involved with one of the best punk labels around these days called Cagematch Federation.

We have only one fanzine in our scene, *Dödscell*. It is by the guitarist of PERSONKRETS 3:1 who runs it and it's quite good. I really hope that there will be some new fanzines or distros here in Umeå, because it is as important as everything else in a punk rock scene. Our scene is growing, there are a lot of new faces, so I think things will move in the right direction during these next couple of years. We are now working our asses off for our own place to have gigs. It's not that there are no places in Umeå where we can have gigs. It's just more that we don't think we can do it in our own way. Hopefully we will have a activist-punk in Umeå later this year.

Another thing that's happening locally are a lot of punx in Umeå have begun tattooing, which I find realy amusing. Robert (REGULATIONS, DEAD ONES, VICIOUS), Mark (THE RATS) and Räkan (PERSONKRETS 3:1) have all started to put ink to skin, and I think all of them are already doing it quite well. The reason I choose to mention this is that I think it is a good way to show that you can do different stuff within the DIY-punk scene, not just play music or set up gigs. I really wish more things like this would show up in Umeå while the scene is growing and we can get a really good self-sustaining, punk community in Umeå.

So as you can see, this small town far up in the north is really moving forward. We wish that a large number of bands will continue to take the long trips to play here, and that more people will take the time to travel here and see what's going on. This isn't the last time you will here about Umeå. DIY punk rock // Potin (A)(E)

Go to www.umeahardcore.com for links to all the bands mentioned in this scene repport, and for more info about Umeå or booking, email info@umeahardcore.com

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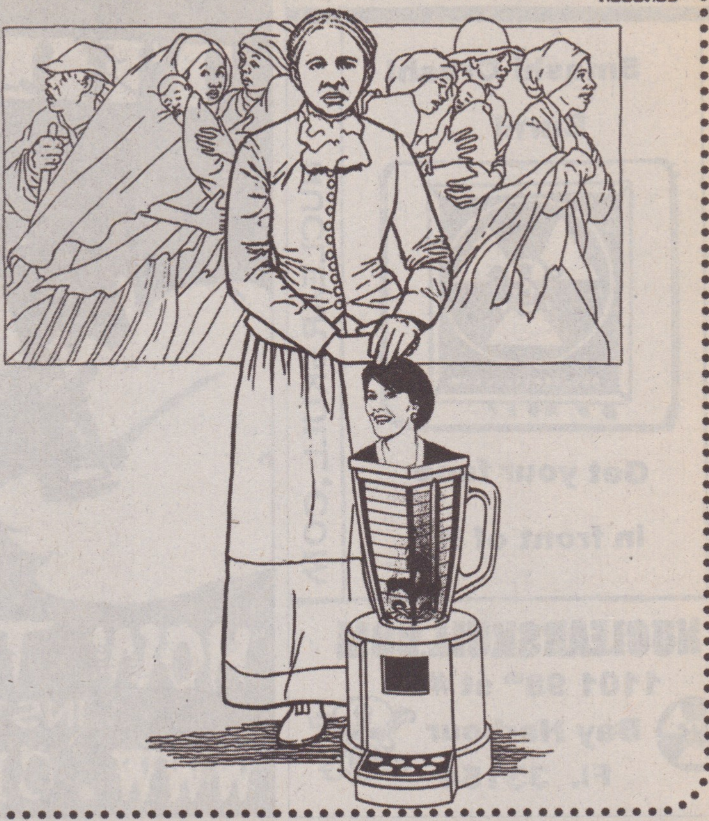

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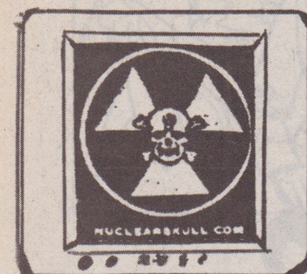

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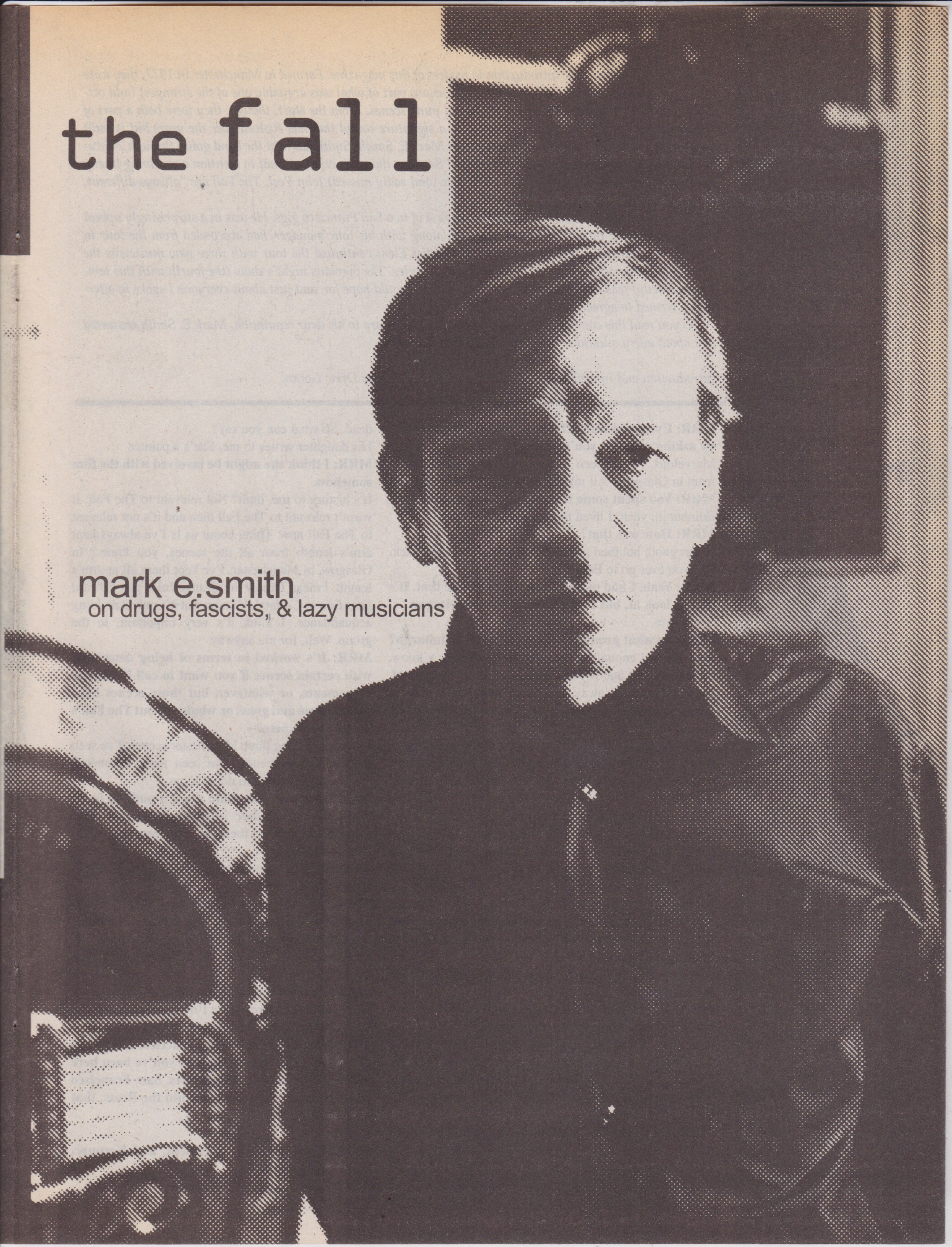


mark e.smith

on drugs, fascists, & lazy musicians

The Fall should need no introduction to readers of this magazine. Formed in Manchester in 1977, they were (alongside The Buzzcocks and Warsaw/Joy Division) part of what was arguably one of the strongest (and certainly one of the most influential) of the initial punk scenes. From the start, though, they were both a part of and apart from any punk scene. They created a signature sound that has evolved over the years but is built around the caustic lyrics of founder and singer Mark E. Smith. Smith has kept the band going through 24 studio albums, several live albums, and more Peel Sessions than any other act, not to mention a revolving lineup of countless musicians. In the words of the late (and sadly missed) John Peel, The Fall are "always different, always the same."

I met up with Mark E. Smith the day after the first of two San Francisco gigs. He was in a surprisingly upbeat mood, considering three members of his band, along with his tour manager, had absconded from the tour in Phoenix a week earlier. He and his wife/keyboardist Eleni continued the tour with three new musicians the record label Narnack had found for them in Los Angeles. The previous night's show (the fourth with this temporary lineup) was as blistering a Fall gig as anyone could hope for, and just about everyone I spoke to afterwards seemed to agree.

As you read this conversation, keep in mind that, contrary to his dour reputation, Mark E. Smith answered just about every question with a laugh and a smile.

Introduction and interview by Allan McNaughton. Photo by Drew Goran.

MRR: I've got some stuff to ask you, but I'll just start by asking you how you're doing?

Marvelous. Never been better actually. Where are you from in Glasgow? All my mates are from the Gorbals.

MRR: You spent some time in Scotland, right?

Edinburgh, yeah. I lived there for a year or two.

MRR: How was that?

It was good, but then it got a bit trendy so I moved back. Did you ever go to Edinburgh?

MRR: Yeah, I had mates there and stuff like that. It's nice to look at, but I prefer the people in Glasgow.

Same here.

MRR: So what prompted the move up to Edinburgh?

Well I'd had enough of the Manchester scene, y'know. It's a long time ago if you think about it, '89 or summat. It was a bit too far away, and all my good mates were in Glasgow. When I went back to Manchester it was good cos all that Hacienda and Madchester shit was over. It was quite intense in Manchester for a while, very heavy, if you lived there. Everybody you saw wanted to love yer. Y'know what I mean? Cos they're all on E or Charlie.

MRR: And you weren't into that.

(laughs) Not really, can you see me being into that?

MRR: Not even so much doing E, but just that whole kind of false lovey-dovey thing.

Yes, I didn't agree with it.

MRR: But speaking of the Hacienda, I wanted to ask you, first of all, would you say you were mates with Ian Curtis before he died? What do you think of them making a film about him?

Are they making a film? I didn't know. That's interesting. News to me!

MRR: You're probably going to be in it. Somebody's going to be playing you in it probably!

It was very weird for me. I never liked Joy Division. The week before he died he came over and he said "I've got a serious need to talk to you" and then all the people hanging around Joy Division said "don't talk to Mark"... that was my reputation...

MRR: What did they think would happen if he talked to you?

Don't ask me. I don't know. Next week he was fuckin dead. So what can you say?

His daughter writes to me. She's a painter.

MRR: I think she might be involved with the film somehow.

It's history to me, innit? Not relevant to The Fall. It wasn't relevant to The Fall then and it's not relevant to The Fall now. Thing about us is I've always kept arm's length from all the scenes, you know? In Glasgow, in Manchester, I've kept them all at arm's length. I mean I know the Orange Juice guy Edward [*sic: Edwyn Collins*], y'know, but it's only a nodding acquaintance. I think it's very important, to the group. Well, for me anyway.

MRR: It's worked in terms of being associated with certain scenes if you want to call it that, or movements, or whatever, but those scenes have sort of come and gone, or whatever, but The Fall's always been there.

I've seen fucking three Manchester scenes, I've seen three Glasgow scenes, I've seen three Edinburgh scenes... it's nothing to do with me.

MRR: In a way you could say it's nothing to do with you, in another way you could say they wouldn't have been there, in some respects, without The Fall.

Well, to contradict you there, we were always alright without 'em...

MRR: You were, but whether or not they would have been alright without you, in some respects.

Well, to have the idea that we're somehow financially better off, or whatever, is a load of balls, you know.

MRR: I wasn't implying anything like that...

No, I know you weren't, but I'm saying. Don't make out I'm responsible for it either!

MRR: So we're here in San Francisco, and you're doing two gigs, two nights, and you've been here a few times before. What does San Francisco mean to you? Were you ever into the Beats, that kind of thing?

Who?

MRR: Like the Beat movement, and Kerouac, and stuff like that.

I don't know, I liked Bukowski, but I can't see it really. They've got some good publishers out here, haven't they? Published all that old Wyndham Lewis shit, which I'm a big fan of. More of a Wyndham Lewis fan than a Jack Ker-ack!

Well, John The Postman was a postman here for two years. He's an old Manchester punk. [John The Postman released a couple of independent LPs of punked-up cover songs in the Late 70s, featuring a host of soon-to-be famous Manchester musicians, possibly including Mark E. Smith's first appearance on vinyl.] He comes here for two years and gets a fucking job as a fucking postman! He comes from North Manchester. Gets a job as a postman in San Francisco. On his feet! Is that North Manchester stupid or what?

MRR: I'll take your word for that.

He loved it. He loved the Grateful Dead. And The Fall.

MRR: They're not for me, the Grateful Dead.

No, no, they're not for me either. But he was a postman in Manchester, you know.

MRR: Well it's a trade you can take with you.

He did it on foot though, because of his Manchester credentials. You should have seen him, when he emigrated he was like this (gestures to show excessive girth), and the last time I saw him he had legs like a sailor.

MRR: It's the hills. Walking up those hills.

Delivering letters! So that's what I know about San Francisco. I've never really been 'round here, you know, apart from working, you know. I've never been a tourist really. When I'm working I can't concentrate on, you know... I mean, I'm not saying I'm a Morrissey or whatever, I mean I've seen Fisherman's Wharf, I've seen The Fillmore. But it's very important, wherever you go; I mean to me, San Francisco is as important as Blackburn or Glasgow, you know, in a group way. I mean, if I was here on holiday, yeah I would go out.

MRR: Do you go on holiday?

I've not been on holiday for a while. (We go outside so Mark can have a cigarette. Talk turns to the illegality of smoking in many places in America.) Best place was Texas though. They just close the fucking doors, and go, "well, in the State of Texas, it's illegal, but I'm so busy, and I can never find out where these people are smoking..." and they've got these butter dishes on all the tables. But it is against the law.

MRR: Well there's places everywhere where they don't care.

Yeah but if you're traveling round you don't know where they are...

MRR: Just follow your nose. They've got the smoking ban in Scotland now.

Yeah, and Ireland as well. That's a surprise, intit?

MRR: I'll tell you what, I personally know three people that have jacked it in. Lifelong smokers! Cos they sit in the pub all fucking day so what are they going to do?

Well they're not getting me laddie, I'll tell you that.

MRR: So is it not in England then; just Scotland and Ireland?

No, it's been blocked in England. Well you know why don't you, they get these big subsidies from the common market... if they don't bring in the bans they lose the farming subsidies. I mean Ireland, that's outrageous.

I like tobacco though. I like to smoke. If you're in a group, everybody thinks you're into drugs and all that. I just like a drink and a smoke. Always been like that.

MRR: Well they used to say in the old days that The Fall was "amphetamine-fuelled."

Yeah, well, wasn't everybody? (laughs) If you work on the docks, you have to get up at five o'clock. If you're working five til five, you need a bit of help, you know?

MRR: Reading a bit about UK politics from over here, there's a sense that the Tories are going to worm their way back into power. Not that it makes much of a difference, since Labour are essentially Tories now anyway...

In 1997 I said they were a recipe for Fascism.

MRR: The Tories?

Labour. I thought that in 1997 and I think that now. The BNP (British National Party, a National Front offshoot) where I live are winning elections left right and center.

MRR: That's what I've been hearing. It's crazy.

It was obviously going to happen because this government is so stupid. I mean why did they go into the Iraq war? America's got their own concerns, but...

MRR: So do you think the policies of Labour alienated people to the extent that they turned to the BNP?

Turned to fucking fascism. That's what I always thought... I knew it was going to happen. Cos they're idiots. It's just a middle-class party. Supposed to be a Labour party, for the working class. They've all got three houses, three cars, people see that.

MRR: So people see the BNP as an answer?

Yeah, normally sensible people. My friends, friends of mine. It's awful.

MRR: But if you don't vote Labour, who else is there to vote for?

That's what they say to me. But I'll tell you this Allan, my father, my grandfather, fought against the fucking Nazis so you could do what you wanted. They're bringing in ID cards and all this. I know it's normal in America, but that's why they went to Europe. Now it's all being brought in. By so-called Socialists.

MRR: Well they haven't been a socialist party for a while have they.

No, that disappeared a long time ago. As they will tell you in Glasgow! They're not very happy about it there.

I always liked that Frank Zappa LP, have you heard it, *We're Only In It For The Money*...

MRR: I've not heard it. I'm not much of a Frank Zappa fan.

No, I'm not either but this is very good. "How I love ya how I love ya how I love ya Frisco, I'll go from LA to Pittsburgh, join a rock band, smoke a lot of dope…"

MRR: I'll have to check it out. I never realized, until I watched that Captain Beefheart documentary that John Peel narrated, I never realized how much Frank Zappa helped Captain Beefheart.

Yeah, I never realized either, until I saw that documentary. He got him studio time and everything didn't he.

He would have been living in the desert, wouldn't he?

MRR: Not that it did him any good, signing all those contracts. He signed everything they put in front of him and never earned a penny.

I did that too! I've had about twenty record companies. I sign everything.

MRR: That's something we've been exploring in the last couple of issues of the magazine, so-called independent labels...

They're full of shit.

MRR: Exactly, well basically, the way they act these days is as bad as, if not worse than, major labels.

Matador for instance, what a load of rip-offs they are. They rip you off more I think... The biggest racket is American indie labels.

MRR: With the exception of Narnack of course...

Narnack have been very good to me.

MRR: Well, certainly, the records are in all the shops, so what more can you ask for. Unless you want to get your mug on MTV, I don't know what sort of sway they've got in that area.

Can't quite see that! We're not Franz Ferdinand mate, yet.

MRR: A lot was made of how important The Fall was to John Peel. To what extent do you think John Peel was important to The Fall?

Me and John had this special agreement. I didn't talk to him and he didn't talk to me.

MRR: What was that about?

Well it's not nice to meet people that think a lot of you.

MRR: You must meet a lot of people that think a lot of you.

Not really, no. I don't talk to musicians much. Except the ones I'm working with. He used to send me postcards and I used to write to him. Only now and again, you know. It was quite horrible; I saw this program on television. He had a special little room where he kept all his Fall records. He had a library of records the size of this room, but he had a little office just for his Fall records. That's incredible intit? I didn't know that, until he was dead.

MRR: You're doing a new album this week. Will this be the first time you've done a new album without doing a Peel session to try out the songs?

Yeah. Now Peel's gone I don't think the BBC's ever going to be the same again. I don't know if you were there at the time but it was horrible. They were having all these special gigs. It was like INXS and The Cure…all these groups. I didn't know John very well but I knew he hated these groups. I know for a fact. I only talked to him twice in my whole entire life. I've talked to you more than I talked to John Peel. But it seemed like, from the outside, that we were best mates. But I've never heard an INXS track on John Peel, have you? And I've been listening on and off since 1975.

MRR: All these people that never gave a toss when he was alive were trotting out their tributes.

That's the way people are I'm afraid.

MRR: The band who went home, that was the same people who recorded (the most recent album) Fall Heads Roll, right? What sort of relationship did you have with them? Were you mates with them, or was it strictly business? Cos that's a good few years you've been playing with them.

That's true. They went home because of my violent and abusive behavior!

MRR: It took them three years to figure that out?

I flicked a piece of paper at the back of one of them's head.

MRR: And they all went home?

That's where fellas like you have got it right. You struck out. British people are so fucking spoiled. What annoys me about it is they didn't knock on the door and say, we fuckin' hate your guts, we're going home. To me, that's what a man would say. It's their loss.

It's hard to deal with musicians. I'm more of a writer, and a singer.

MRR: At this point – The Fall started in 1977 – by 2006, you'd think someone working with you would have an idea of what's expected. So what's the surprise?

I think the whole thing about what you were saying about independent labels before, it's like, the people I meet, they go to music college and all this. For instance, the Strokes, their dads are in the music business.

MRR: It's like there's a career path.

You got it in one Allan. And if you don't make a million in three years...my idea is: Why don't you go to college and learn physics, biology, something useful? I mean, talking about the old days, the good thing about New Order, they were always totally independent. You know what I mean? They didn't set up an independent label so they could get nice jobs and get women and all this. I'd say that for them. They set up the Hac, [The Hacienda, a Manchester club started by New Order and Factory Records that became the epicenter of the Madchester scene.] I mean I didn't like it myself, but everybody got the same wage, they could express themselves, it didn't matter what background you were from, you didn't have to have connections.

That trio, they just fucked off cos they're only getting a hundred dollars a day. A hundred dollars a day is not a bad wage where I live! Eighty quid a day, seven days a week. It's not fucking cruelty, is it? It's not violent and abusive, really. And your guitar's paid for, your food's paid for, and everything you can drink, and your hotel's paid for. I mean, what fucking soft bastards.

MRR: Seriously.

Soft cunts. I think they were all mummy's boys. The bass player, the last time we went to Switzerland, we came back and they guy's mother picked him up at the airport! I mean the guy's 31! And the other one, the guitarist, he's 26, and he still lives at home. So you put them through a ten hour drive through the desert, from Tucson to Dallas, it's not that fucking hard, is it?

In another way, these things are for the best sometimes.

MRR: Well, if there was tension, if they weren't happy, maybe they're as well away.I think they're very encouraged by these new groups. I think they're all wannabes. If they were in charge, they'd be Oasis, they think.

MRR: Well good luck to them. I'll be looking forward to their album. Maybe this time next year they could be sitting here talking to me, talking to Maximum Rocknroll! If they're lucky. If they can get me on the phone. I'm a busy man.

"I'm not in today. Your mate, McNaughton!" ha ha. Good luck to them, like you said.

MRR: Well those guys last night did a bang up job of playing the existing songs. It remains to be seen whether they'll do the business on record.

Oh, I think they will, but don't say anything, cos, touch wood, you know. They're already demanding their own rooms! The drummer wants a single room.

MRR: Primadonnas, eh? I mean, hotels are a luxury!

He couldn't sleep so he wants his own room.

MRR: Tell him to sleep in the van. It's quiet in there.

Ha ha. The car park's nice, if you go in the shade.

MRR: Stretch out in the back, he's not a tall man. So you're going down to LA for the rest of the week to record?

Yeah. I think I've got half this LP done.

MRR: So you'll just put those guys in a room.

They don't know yet if I'm gonna use them or not. I can play guitar, believe it or not, and Eleni's very very good on the keyboards and the bass. Might be good. I think it will be good.

Stay tuned! The Fall's latest album is titled Fall Heads Roll *and is on Narnack in the U.S. (www.narnackrecords.com). For more information on The Fall, there is a rather good website you can visit at www.visi.com/fall that includes a comprehensive discography and a timeline of the many members over the years.*

CARDIAC ARREST

ST LOUIS

Cardiac Arrest hails from St. Louis, in the greatly overlooked Midwest. They play raw, biting hardcore not unlike the classic sounds of the early 1980s. After what seemed an eternity of bad luck, the future finally holds some promise for them. Their debut 7" has turned a lot of heads, and their new record will undoubtedly turn even more. Score one for St. Louis! Interview by Andrew Diaz, photos by Big Drawz and Tony Grenner.

Tom: Drums.
Jeff: Bass.
Scott: Guitar.
Rob: Vocals.

MRR: Explain how Cardiac Arrest got together.
Scott: Well roughly between the years of 1995 and 2003...
Rob: Have you ever seen *2001: A Space Odyssey*? There's that baby and it's all, "duuuuuuhh *DUUUUUHHH*…"
Scott: Wait! *Wait!*
Rob: …and the apes are playing bones…
Scott: *Don't cut me off!*
Rob: …and everyone's going crazy.
Scott: We were pretty much inspired by that film. Not me-Rob was, and in 1990…
Jeff: What?
Scott: I'm just letting everyone know we're silly and wacky dudes who have a good sense of humor!
Rob: So anyway, the history of the band: we actually started around 2001 when I lived in Chicago. I had been jamming some songs with Mark from Punch in the Face, but as luck would have it I moved back to St. Louis. I felt some of the songs were too good to waste so I called up some guys that I used to be in a band with way back when, and many members later here we are.

MRR: Why so many member changes-are you that hard to be in a band with, Rob?
(Everyone laughs)
Rob: Well, our first bassist skipped out on our second show and then stopped returning our calls. Then the first drummer quit because he wanted to be in a Dave Matthews cover band or something. Punk music was "inhibiting his creativity." It took us an entire summer to get a new drummer. Then, both the guitarist and bassist quit to go to grad school, so I was left scrambling to replace them. By this time we had gone too far to quit and I felt the songs were too good to waste.
Scott: …or it was too easy to find new members!
(Everyone laughs)

MRR: What happened to the first press of your 7" on Underestimated, and why is it so hard

to come by?

Rob: We put them in a rowboat and fired flaming arrows at it to send them to Valhalla. What was that movie with Macaulay Culkin, where he puts his dead grandpa in a boat and fires flaming arrows?

Jeff: *Home Alone.*

Scott: No, I think it was *My Girl.*

Rob: …and then he gets stung by a bee and digs in the sand and finds two Floorpunch records on gold vinyl.

Scott: All wackiness aside, we don't know.

Jeff: We tried to get more and we were told there were no more.

Scott: A lot of distros and kids didn't end up receiving it.

MRR: You guys did a short East Coast tour last year. How did it go? It sounded like you guys had a lot of difficulties...

Jeff: Well, I guess the only difficulties we had were having T-shirts that no one wanted to buy.

Rob: …and the van.

Tom: …and no records.

Scott: We found a van in a junkyard essentially, which we rented for $500. We didn't tell the guy where we were taking it, and went to all the states where he specifically forbade us to go.

> **ST. LOUIS HAS NEVER REALLY BEEN ON THE MAP. THERE WERE SOME BANDS IN THE '80S AND '90S THAT DID STUFF, BUT FOR THE MOST PART EVERYTHING SEEMS TO HAVE GONE UNNOTICED.**

Tom: …and out of the country.

Jeff: We got a ticket in Toronto that was proof that we left the country!

Rob: I had to call my insurance agent to get my insurance transferred so we could take it. The guy ended up fighting with him and hanging up on him twice! This was around the time we had to be on the road so that we could make Pittsburgh on schedule.

Scott: We didn't have any 7"s, we had shirts no one wanted to buy (despite the fact that were hilarious)…

Rob: *And* we were a virtually unknown band!

MRR: Can you tell us about the shirts?

Tom: They were Rob's idea, period.

Jeff: Uh, they were a great idea, I guess…

Rob: Noooo, they were approved by everyone!

(Everyone laughs)

Jeff: It's just that kids in hardcore don't wanna laugh at themselves. The T-shirts said, "I'm With Stupid" and the arrow was pointing up.

Rob: Another design said, "This Guy Sucks" with the arrow pointing over.

Jeff: Yeah, but kids in hardcore want skulls and bloody…uh, pools of blood on their shirts. They don't want self-deprecating humor.

Scott: I personally prefer shirts that say "brotherhood" somewhere on them and a picture of the band on the back singing.

Rob: I like the ones that say "betrayal."

Scott: I like stuff about heartache and friendship.

MRR: Tell me about St. Louis. Right now there are more cool St. Louis bands than there has ever been before. How has the scene changed since you guys started to go to shows?

Rob: Well, before 2001, there were a few bands here and there, but there wasn't a lot going on that left St. Louis. When I started going to punk shows in the mid 1990s, they were overrun by racist, nazi, drunk punk assholes and the people that tolerated them. The hardcore scene was predominantly heavier chug stuff. In relation to the current scene, pretty much all the kids who helped build and shape the scene in 2001 are still around, I guess. Kids seem more diverse now; before it seemed like everyone went to the same shows regardless. It was probably because there weren't that many shows coming through.

Jeff: I think it's more fun to play now, because there are more good bands to see.

Rob: Before, it seemed like kids had fewer inhibitions and had more fun at shows. They cared less about their image.

Scott: It just seems like when it started it was more about unityhood. Now it's just dissolved into some whack, disillusioned scene. It's like, "What happened to the strength in unity?"

Rob: Hey, you can't be fed with unity!

Jeff: There's no "I" in unity, Scott.

MRR: It seemed in like the late '90s/early '00s, there weren't really any bands here putting out records, and a lot of bands skipped over St. Louis.

Rob: St. Louis has never really been on the map. There were some bands in the '80s and '90s that did stuff, but for the most part everything seems to have gone unnoticed.

Scott: The only band even known outside of St. Louis is Ultraman.

Jeff: Well, there were a couple…

(Everyone begins to yell random old St. Louis bands)

Rob: It just seems that those bands didn't leave much of a mark. Like today when we talk to kids across the country, we rarely hear, "Oh St. Louis? Like Ultraman?" When you go to websites like Kill from the Heart or read books like *American Hardcore*, there are whole chapters dedicated to different cities, and then there is a paragraph about St. Louis; I think that says something.

Rob: Who yelled White Pride before?

Scott: That was Diaz…

MRR: They were mentioned in *MRR* before. They regarded them as the most offensive band they'd ever heard. Black Flag requested they play with them when they came to St. Louis.

Scott: Wasn't one of the guys Hispanic and another homosexual?

Rob: For people that don't know, they were a total joke band back in the '80s. They were trying to be St. Louis' answer to Fear. The NAACP would protest outside of their shows and stuff. I also once heard that one of the guys was supposed to be the original drummer for Fugazi, and Ian had found out about them.

Scott: Also, in the 1980s there were a couple of punk bands and new wave type bands, but nothing that ever really left St. Louis.

Rob: Also, with some of these bands, we're not a part of their scenes. They would play to different crowds than we do. So basically in our scene, the music we play, there has never been a lasting mark made in St. Louis.

MRR: How important do you feel it is to be original in a hardcore band these days?

Rob: Is this a joke? There aren't really any original sounds anymore. Even with bands that are around today that people are like, "Wow! No one is doing this type of stuff right now…" they still compare them to old bands. Well, maybe not necessarily a band, but it's like, "Oh, so and so sounds like this era or this time period or this country's style…"

Scott: Pretty much any rock genre today can be compared to an earlier time period.

Jeff: The question is if it's sincerely played or not.

Rob: Not "sincerely…"

Jeff: Well, I think playing it well goes hand in hand with sincerity. If you're just trying to make something that sounds like something else, I'm not going to care about it even if it works.

Rob: Oh, I would! I like good music.

Jeff: I don't think that makes it good though.

Rob: Well I don't think "good dudes" make bands good. There are too many

bad bands out there.

MRR: This next one's for Scott.
Rob: "Scott, what do you think about the Breaks? And how have they influenced St. Louis?"
Jeff: "How are they the best band in St. Louis? And how have they put St. Louis on the map?"

MRR: *Scott*, what's it like being the only edgeman in a band full of wasteoids?
Scott: I'm pretty much the only edge person in St. Louis.
Rob: Richie? Shadow?
Scott: So two of my friends in St. Louis are edge.
Rob: Scotty P? *Hahahahaha*! Can we put "everyone laughs" there?
(Everyone laughs)
Scott: St. Louis has very few people who are edge, anyway. It's not like I do it to be a part of some clique. It's just how I live every day. It's not a big switch between the band environment and the everyday environment.
Jeff: I don't think Rob and I are wasteoids.
Rob: Yeah, Tom maybe.
Jeff: I think we live in the shadow of two breweries.
Rob: There are not too many edge people in the Midwest in general.

MRR: What goes into the song writing process for Cardiac Arr-
(Everyone laughs)

MRR: …and what can we expect in the future as far as music and lyrics go?
Rob: …uh….Tom? Wanna take this one?
Tom: Well, when I sit down to write a song, I reach deep within myself and try to find the things that invoke the strongest feelings and put that into my drums…
Scott: Once he's expressed the ideas in his drum parts, the rest is obvious from there. Once we know the feeling, the music just flows.
Rob: It's all about the heart! If the music is sincere then you will go far…
Jeff: Ha! Fuck you!
Rob: Really though, I write all the songs and bring them to practice and show everyone how to play them.
Scott: Yeah, we add very minor embellishments. We just basically show up and play.
Rob: As far as the future goes, I think the next record is gonna be pretty much Norma Jean-ish.
Scott: Which is good, because we've been growing out our bangs.
Rob: We started to harmonize a lot, and Jeff has really perfected his screamo scream.
Jeff: *"My heart!"*
Rob: Yeah, I sing while he yells over it.

MRR: Nice, nice. So you guys are pretty much maturing out of the old sound?
Rob: Yeah, man, it was holding us back. We just wanted to get a fan base that we could step off of to the mainstream.
Scott: We've ridden the hype waves to stardom.

MRR: Do you think that a lot of the hard work that goes into being in a band is gone? How easy is it for a bad band to currently tour and put out records?
Rob: Hardcore is going to collapse under its own weight because of so many bad bands. The internet, she's a harsh mistress.
Tom: All you need is time and money.

MRR: All you need is good marketing skills.
Rob: Well, not even that-it's the downside of the internet. So many kids meet so many other kids on the internet, that you don't necessarily have to have a good band. You just have to know the right people to hype your band. If you make

friends and say, "Hey, we're coming to your town," then those kids feel obligated to pump your band. Then bad bands get good shows and it sucks when you're actually in a good band.

Jeff: I think a lot of kids are starting bands because they wanna be famous or they think it's gonna get them somewhere further than just playing music. That's one of the problems, because you're not going to get famous or rich playing this music.

Rob: Yeah, bands that put out a demo, then have a 7" out the next month, then a demo 7" out the next month after that...

Jeff: And like five different T-shirts and hoodies. None of the old hardcore bands did that. You're not gonna make it playing hardcore.

Scott: Plenty of old bands wanted to make it!

Rob: But with all the old bands, they had to change their sound to be big. They knew playing punk wasn't going to get them anywhere, and that's why they're all doing reunions now, because they think it will get them somewhere.

Jeff: So, kids, stop trying! Just give up now!

Scott: On the bright side, gas prices aren't going to go down too significantly, so that will make it harder to tour.

Jeff: No, it will just be rich kids touring and not poor kids.

MRR: Is it important to have a political agenda in a band?

Scott: I don't think any band should be inserting a political agenda into their music if they don't mean it. You should write about stuff that you feel strongly about, or that pisses you off or whatever.

Jeff: It just so happens that things that piss me off on a daily basis have to do with politics.

Rob: I think half the bands out there write political songs that mean nothing to them. They go through the motions and write on "safe" song topics.

Jeff: What are some other safe topics? Your friends letting you down, fakes, poseurs, government, being really mad…

MRR: Don't you think there are still relevant topics?

Tom: If you care about it, write about it.

Rob: Try to write it in a new light, quit saying it the exact same way.

I DON'T THINK ANY BAND SHOULD BE INSERTING A POLITICAL AGENDA INTO THEIR MUSIC IF THEY DON'T MEAN IT. YOU SHOULD WRITE ABOUT STUFF THAT YOU FEEL STRONGLY ABOUT, OR THAT PISSES YOU OFF.

MRR: But can't you say the same thing about music? You're going to write the same riffs as Poison Idea, too.

Rob: Music is like a feeling, *maaaaaaaaan*. Lyrics are like words. You *hear* music, but you don't hear words…when people, uh, speak them.

MRR: Uh, ok. Say you hear a well-written riff and it may not be original, but it's good. You hear a well-written song it may not be groundbreaking but it's still a well-written song.

Rob: I pay attention to songs as a whole more than lyrics.

Scott: Lyrics are really important to me. I think political awareness is a lot of what has kept hardcore where it is, in our hands.

Rob: Exactly what you said before, people should sing about things that they feel strongly about. If the way things are going in society is pissing you off, then by all means sing about that. But what I'm saying about liking music as a whole, is that I appreciate well-written songs. The way the vocal patterns go, the way the riffs go. I'm not saying that lyrics don't matter, but I'd rather hear an awesome song than a shitty song with a good message.

MRR: Then what about hardcore bands with Republican ideals? Could you ever like a band with lyrics to the right, if it had killer riffs?

Scott: No.

Rob: It's definitely not a safe topic. I would have a lot more respect for a band that got on stage and said shit like that, than for a band that got up and said, "who likes pizza!?" Who's going to yell, "*boo*"? I'm definitely not into right wing politics or Christianity, but I would respect a band that went into a basement full of religion-hating people and said, "Hey, we're down with this…"

Jeff: But for Christians, being a missionary and going to places where people aren't going to accept you, that gets them off. That's their thing.

Rob: Well I don't mean for them to get up preaching, or them saying, "You guys are all going to hell! Who wants to be saved? Buy this merch, it will save you! You want to get closer to God? Buy all three colors!"

Scott: It bums me out when I see bands that get up on stage and just say, "Fuck Bush!", because that's the absolute safest thing you could say. But would I listen to a Republican band? No, I wouldn't.

Rob: What about Scott P. and the GOP?

Scott: Scott P and the GOP is a lucrative enterprise that entertains *many* high paying guests.

Rob: L. Ron Hubbard…oops, name drop!

Scott: Yeah, L. Ron, fuck that dude! L. Ron, get out of our scene, I don't care what nobody says!

(Everyone laughs)

Rob: Let's just talk about how awesome Clear Channel is.

MRR: Evidently they've saved hardcore.

Rob: Man, we sound like idiots.

MRR: Besides Cardiac Arrest, what do you guys have going on?

Rob: I book shows in St. Louis, and I'm starting two bands with Andrew Diaz.

Jeff: Oh God, two?

Rob: One will blow your socks off. One will be an indie rock band. All songs written by Andrew Diaz who is into indie rock, majorly!

Scott: I'm also in the Breaks, and a new band with some friends, called Barbiturates.

Jeff: I play in the Adversary Workers, Children of the 11th Hour, and Bill McClelland Motherfuckers. Also, I print patches and make buttons for anyone that wants them.

Tom: I'm in a Dead Milkman tribute band called Lester Shy and the Shyphonics. I go to school and work and don't sleep ever!

MRR: Last words?

Tom: We have a 7" coming out on Kangaroo Records, along with a repress of our first 7".

Rob: Also, a US press of the new 7" will be a split release between No Way and Grave Mistake records, and we're going to do a CD containing both records and a ton of bonus stuff with Lifeline Records in Chicago. We'll also be on the second volume of the *No Bullshit* comp on No Way Records.

Scott: Also there is a St. Louis comp that should be coming out soon featuring bands like Cross Examination, the Breaks, Step On It, Rotting Out, Adversary Workers, Eating Rats, Corbeta Corbata, Sayonara, Resolve, and ourselves, among others.

www.myspace.com/ca
beat_to_death@hotmail.com

MIKA MIKO

Every few years there is a band that pops up so suddenly and unexpectedly that you wonder where the fuck they came from. It's kind of like the Mobile, Alabama Leprechaun or seeing people surf with sharks, but in, like, performance and sound terms. When this happens it is time to Carpe Diem and suck in the moment for all its worth.

My introduction to Mika Miko was seeing them play in a dive-y Mexican Restaurant half an hour outside their hometown of LA. They hit the stage with such rawness and intensity that they couldn't help but siphon the crowds' attention. Usually you would expect this from seasoned musicians who have been playing for years. It was unbelievable that such energy and sound was coming from these underage kids who could've been in high school. Everyone was beyond stoked.

Shortly afterwards they came out with a 7" on Post Present Medium (or PPM), Dean of The Wives' label, which quickly sold out on their first nation wide tour. Now they have their first full length, the cryptically named CYSLABF, coming out on Kill Rock Stars this summer. I met up with Mika Miko at our mutual favorite Bay Area ice cream parlor, Maggie Mudd's, to discuss the vampire/Guitar Center connection. Interview, introduction, and photos by Vice Cooler.

MRR: What's the truth behind the rumor that you all initially met at a Los Angeles guitar center?

Jennifer: The store?

Jenna: I think that story is confused with another one.

Jessie: I think that's meeting Dean [Spunt, from the Wives and PPM].

Jennifer: We saw the Wives there for the first time—well met them...

MRR: Over a homemade Slits shirt?

Jennifer: Me and Jessica were at Guitar Center with our dad and Dean and Jeremy were there. I had a homemade Slits patch on my jacket and they thought that was "so cool." A week later we were at the Smell and we saw them. We were like "Hey! you were at Guitar Center." Then he asked us to play a show.

MRR: Your first show?

Jennifer: It was our second show but it was a really important show.

MRR: Where was your first show then?

Michelle: House of Drums in Granada Hills.

MRR: And all of you were still in high school right?

All: Yeah.

Jessie: Were we in high school still?

Jennifer: We might have dropped out by then. I feel like me and Jenna had already dropped out.

MRR: How did the band initially start?

Michelle: Jennifer and Jessie were living in LA when I started hanging out at their house.

Jessie: It all started with DBL (Dead Banana Ladies).

Jennifer: DBL was a crust-thrash band that we were in. Before that it was some weird shit...

Jessie: Before that we were trying to cover the Slits!

Jenna: It was like –

Jessie: Boot camp for us!

Jennifer: – on a really heavy homemade guitar.

Jenna: It was us not being able to play instruments, or sing, and trying to do a band without drums... for a couple of years!

Jennifer: When people would try out for singing we would force them to sing the Slits.

Jenna: Or Crass!

MRR: So you must have been pretty young when Dead Banana Ladies started?

Jessie: I think I was 14.

Jenna: I was 15.

Jennifer: So I must've been 17.

MRR: So how did you start playing with Michelle?

Jennifer: After Dead Banana Ladies...

Jessie: That started with Megadeth.

Jenna: I met Michelle in 10th grade, through someone.

Michelle: We had homeroom together.

Jenna: She was a punk.

Michelle: Jenna was a T and I was an S.

Jenna: She's low S.

Michelle: Yeah a low S. She was wearing an X-Ray Spex shirt and I thought that was cool. She also had bi-hawks and I was like, "Cool, I like the same shit too."

Jennifer: And then one day Dead Banana Ladies wasn't working out; I don't know why.

Jenna: ...and then Michelle filled in for Jessie when she had one of her accidents where she splits her brain open.

Jessie: And Jerrik touched my skull...

Jennifer: Am I still on Dead Banana Ladies?

Jenna: Yeah...

Jennifer: So Michelle filled in on bass.

Michelle: And I didn't know how to play!

MRR: So when did you all initially start writing songs, with Dead Banana Ladies?

Jenna: When DBL was still together.

Michelle: I came over one day and we wrote "End of Time" together.

Jennifer: 1977?

Michelle: Yeah! We wrote 1977 together. We wrote it and thought it was cool. I didn't know how to play. When we were done I thought, "Wow this is cool! I get to play guitar with these girls!"

MRR: You had never played guitar before?

Michelle: With people. I had played bass with a friend's band. But it was literally practice. We would play an FYP song and that was it. So when this started I began to play guitar more to get better.

MRR: What initially starts your songwriting?

Jennifer: Just usually a guitar or bass part.

MRR: And since both of you sing how do you handle to vocal parts?

Jenna: We will usually work it out while they are doing the song or after the set up the song we will

figure out together where each of us wants to sing. Usually where she wants to sing I don't even want to sing.

Jennifer: Or one of us comes up with a good keyboard part. So whoever isn't playing the keyboard will sing over that section.

MRR: How has the transition from being younger kids to becoming young adults been for the band? Has it had any affect on you?

Jenna: We were never a high school band. We all dropped out.

Jessie: And I was in home school.

MRR: So everyone's dropouts?

Kate: I was in high school when I first joined.

Jenna: But initially no one was in high school.

MRR: And you're still young. How has the transition been to where you are now?

Michelle: I still feel like I am 17. I do not feel 21.

Jenna: Well, you don't look 17. Sorry.

(laughter)

Michelle: I feel like I haven't changed though.

MRR: So even if you don't feel like you have changed, the shows have. They have become a lot larger and wilder. Like last night there were tons of kids that neither of us knew. That must be strange.

Jenna: It was pretty gradual. It isn't shocking because it's not like we all of a sudden had an article or record come out and cause an explosion like on an MTV scale.

Michelle: We have also been around for a long time. We play at the Smell quite often. We also happen to play with a lot of bands that are really big.

MRR: So you don't notice it?

Michelle: No.

Jenna: There was never a shocking moment where it was like, "Where did all of these people come from?"

Michelle: Well there was our show when we got home from tour. That was insane. That was the funnest show of my life.

Jennifer: Yeah that was really like "whoa." But also with DBL it was the most boring thing ever to play shows with that band. So then when we started doing shows with Mika Miko it was a lot easier to have fun. People would just have a good time. People would...mosh.

(everyone laughs)

Jennifer: It was just immediately a more fun band.

Jenna: Which is why DBL stopped.

Jennifer: I remember DBL totally stopped when one day we decided to put a keyboard in. It didn't make any sense. It turned it into this really bad band.

Jenna: New wave trash.

Jennifer: That was the end of it.

Jessie: That's when I quit DBL.

MRR: This past summer you all experienced your first national tour. When I was looking through your photo diary and listening to stories it looked intense—sleeping on rest stop lawns, having to stay at the Booty man's house in Alabama, playing oddball shows to a handful of kids in living rooms—that must've been so exciting. What your hindsight perspective of it now that more time has gone by? Was it as good, or bad, as you imagined?

Michelle: Our first tour was a great experience. I look at my tour diary every once in a while and all those pictures make me laugh every time! We had fun, went through some crazy shit, got through it and made it home. I can't wait to do it again.

Jennifer: You pretty much just said most of the good stuff that happened. Except, someone stole my favorite pants in NY.

MRR: Kate, when you joined the band you hadn't been playing drums for that long, right?

Kate: Me and Jessie would practice in the basement for hours—the same songs.

MRR: But you had only played a handful of time right?

Kate: Yeah. I just learned the songs. We would just practice instrumentally over and over again in the basement.

MRR: Did the first show trip you out super hard?

Kate: I was really afraid. Before we went on the US tour I had only played three or four shows. (laughs) It's kind of ridiculous!!!

MRR: So you had hardly played then just hit the road?

Kate: Yeah!

Jenna: But she went through intense training.

Kate: Yeah it was like boot camp. I was going to Malibu High at the time and would drive for an hour after school to practice for three hours and then drive home. I got drum parts donated. I had no idea what I was doing. Dean taught me how to play.

MRR: One thing I notice about the band is that you seem to keep things very localized. Very communal. Like volunteering at the Smell and working with PPM, is this something intentional or is it just this way?

Kate: In LA I think its a really community based scene. Everyone helps each other out and everyone is really involved. Because we are all friends and you work with your friends.

Michelle: Friends just ask us to play shows and we are like, "Yeah we'll play. Sounds cool."

Jenna: Who the fuck in some other place would want to put out the record and would we want to work with? That has only happened recently.

Jennifer: We wanted PPM to put the vinyl out because Kill Rock Stars is putting out the CD. We really wanted PPM to be a part of it since he did the 7".

MRR: Michelle, you pretty much cur rated the Los Angeles: Under 21 compilation right?

Michelle: My friend, Felipe and I put it together.

MRR: What made you decide to put it together?

Michelle: Dean started putting on the under 21 shows. My friend and I decided that it would be cool if we got all of the bands who do the shows to be on a compilation. We put it together and told Jim (Smith, of the Smell and Ole Factory) about our idea and he put it out. It took forever because we went on tour and it took a year to get it together. Its doing really well and Amoeba keeps asking for more.

MRR: Because it's good!

Michelle: Thanks. All of the bands are awesome and before it came out they were all under 21. It's cool. I'm really happy I got to be a part of it and glad that we got to play those shows. Dean's idea I guess inspired it all.

MRR: You've been working on your new record but it was interrupted quickly by Michelle's accident.

Michelle: We had been recording and half way through it I got hit by a drunk driver. That put us back a little bit because they kept changing my cast and then I had a brace and then physical therapy. They told me I wouldn't be able to play for at least six months

Jenna: If ever...

Michelle: Yeah! If ever! I started to cry when I went into surgery because I thought I would never be able to play again. But the day I got my cast off we had a practice. We had a show two days later. I could only not play two of the songs. So I thought, "Fuck the doctors! I can do this!"

MRR: And you had played a show with your wrist in a cast anyways, like a stick.

Michelle: Yeah! That was the Under 21 release show. My accident happened on the third and the show was on the eighth of December. I had my cast on and my big leg brace. I had stitches in my knees and nerve damage so I couldn't walk that well. They put the guitar on me and I played with the cast on. I got a four track for my birthday and just started recording stuff like that too.

MRR: So how is the record? It's finished now right?

Jennifer: Yes. Except for mixing.

MRR: Are you stoked?

Michelle: Yeah! It's really great.

MRR: How has the recording been?

Jennifer: Super cool.

MRR: Are you tripped that it's coming out soon?

Michelle: Yeah it's crazy. When it happens I'm going to be like "wow." We went through so much to get it together. We had to wait for me to get better and now we have to mix. In July when it comes out, with artwork and stuff, then it will seem like a huge deal. But now I'm just like "We recorded a record."

Kate: Every song has its own personality. We made sure that every song was special.

MRR: And it's all new songs?

All: Yeah, they aren't on anything else.

Jennifer: But we don't really have much out. We have four songs on a 7" and one on a compilation.

MRR: To close, what is the truth behind you all getting chased by Echo Park vampires?

Jennifer: Yeah Kate and I did. It was like three in the morning and we bought food [in Silver Lake]. It took like an hour for them to make it so we left before we got it. As we were driving off in Kate's new car and these vampires came out of nowhere and jumped on the front of our car. I reversed the car really fast and went backwards really far and the vampire held on. His long black coat and hair was like waving in the wind and he was like starring into our souls. We were just screaming the whole time as it was happening and then suddenly he wasn't on the car anymore. I think he fell off or flew away. And then all the workers came running out and started chasing the car, and one tried to break the window with his fist. It was really fucked up, we didn't even eat their stupid Silver Lake food.

DIGGER AND THE PUSSYCATS

DIGGER AND THE PUSSYCATS

Interview by Patrick Emery

The Melbourne music scene–that's Melbourne, Australia, not Melbourne, Florida–is a fiercely competitive community of artists, wannabe rock 'n' roll svengalis and crusty old local rock legends. In 2003 representatives descended en masse to Melbourne to see what musical gold could be discovered in the sticky carpeted rock 'n' roll mines of Melbourne music venues. It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. It was also the time Sam Agostino (guitar) and Andy Moore (drums) formed Digger and the Pussycats, a two-piece outfit mired in the musical tradition of garage, punk, and blues. They play fast, slow, or medium, depending on the mood of the moment, but always with a colorful sense of humor. And for a band with a career objective simply to fund its weekend alcohol bill, they've been remarkably successful.

In the space of just over two years Digger and the Pussycats has gone from being a hastily conceived comic interlude to a fixture of the competitive local Melbourne music scene. The band has released two critically acclaimed full-length albums (Young, Tight and Alright in 2004 and Watch Yr Back in 2005) and undertaken two extensive and successful tours of Europe. (At the time of this writing, Sam and Andy have just departed Australia for a whirlwind three-week tour of Scandinavian countries to promote the release of the band's second album there.) In between thrashing madly in Digger and the Pussycats Sam and Andy also form two-thirds of Melbourne three-piece power rock group The Kamikaze Trio, a band worth equal attention both live and in recorded format.

MRR: Where did you guys meet originally?

Andy: We met while studying American music and popular culture at Uni, and then we went on to study film together for a few years.

MRR: What were your first impressions of each other?

Sam: I can't really remember too much the first time I met Andy. It was at Uni in a fucking boring class and he seemed like the only person that was into good music. We did a few classes together and I remember one day we ditched and went to buy records together at a record store that was closing down. I think we have been friends ever since.

Andy: At first I was pretty wary of Sam because most of the people studying music at university are complete dicks. I was the loner, I had no friends, so I was pretty stoked when I found someone who liked to go out drinking and was into good music. We traded records with each other for a while, but it took us about twelve months before we actually got together and started making music.

MRR: How did Digger and the Pussycats come into existence?

Andy: We had a three-piece band called Fort Mary. We sacked the bass player from Fort Mary and wanted to start a new three-piece band. To soften the blow for him we said we were going to be a two-piece and we just started doing it. It was supposed to be a bridging band, and just play a few shows so we could get free beer on the weekends.

MRR: What are your major artistic and musical influences?

Sam: I don't think we have major influences. We just play songs and because of the simple set-up they sound the way they do. We just wanna have a good time and drink beer and play loud.

MRR: What were your original expectations for Digger and the Pussycats?

Sam: When we first started we didn't think it had much of a future. It was a bit of a joke, and it's still a bit of a joke. But that's part of it—in Melbourne you get a lot of bands that take it *really* seriously—"We're going to dress like this, and we're gonna do this"—so when Digger started it was refreshing to see a band totally drunk, half starting songs and half finishing songs.

MRR: I've heard that you got your first record deal following a drunken early morning gig at the Pony Bar in the city. Is that true?

Andy: It was about 2 am and there were ten people in the room, and all ten people were dancing and going crazy, shouting out for songs by The Gun Club, The Cramps, whoever. And we didn't know the songs—we'd listened to the records, so we thought we'd have a crack at it. Loki [Lockwood, director of Melbourne label Spooky Records] was mixing the band's sound that night and was impressed enough to offer to release our first album.

Sam: That all happened in 2003. About that time major labels in the United States were flying out people to check out bands and there were dudes who a year beforehand were only half interested in music but were now starting a band to try and get signed. In many ways it embraced a particular time in Melbourne music; it wasn't particularly serious but it was really fun.

Andy: It was really exciting to be in a band at that time 'cause so many people were coming to see gigs. Bands were trying to play with as many other bands as possible to get exposed, and as cheesy as it sounds it was a really exciting time. We were at the complete opposite end of the spectrum of people trying to start bands to earn lots of money.

MRR: Your live shows have always been something worth seeing. Tell me about the times with Tim Hemmensley [vocalist and bass player in notorious rock outfit The Powder Monkeys.]

Sam: Tim came to a lot of our shows at the Tote and The Espy. I remember at the time he was considered a bit of an unsavory character around town but he was our mate and we always had a beer and a laugh. He was really into music and had heaps of good stories about bands and gigs. We asked him once to get up and sing "Bodies" by The Sex Pistols with us. Halfway through I blew up my amp, but he kept going, like a true bloody hero.

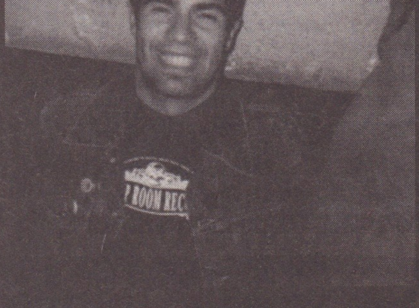
Andy: He was allowed to come and sing with us if he agreed to behave himself and not drink too much. Of course he always drank too much and we would get into trouble, but at the time I think people were treating him unfairly. He'd just come out of rehab and people weren't really giving him a chance. Not long after, he passed away, and I still wonder to this day if the people who gave him the cold shoulder, many of whom were his long-standing mates, regret the way they treated him. I know it really hurt him. We only hung about with Tim for a few months before he passed away, but I'll always remember him as the most passionate fan of music I've ever known. On stage he would give his life for rock and roll, and offstage he was a very sincere and loyal bloke, who was the most amazing story teller I've ever met. I wish I got to know him better.

MRR: Digger and the Pussycats is prone to doing a cover at the end of its set. What are the best, and most obscure, covers you've done?

Sam: The most obscure covers are things we do by other Melbourne bands. We have in the past played songs by bands like The Legends of Motorsport, The Meanies or The Specimens. I guess that's about as obscure as it gets.

MRR: Two-piece bands are not an uncommon creature these days, with bands like The White Stripes and the Black Keys bringing the two-piece format to commercial prominence. Although you've been quoted previously as saying that you "hate two-piece bands...we're looking for a bass player," Andy's skeletal drum kit–no bass drum, no kick drum–does distinguish you from other two-piece bands. Andy, why do you choose to play a stripped-down kit?

Andy: There's two reasons for it. The first, and most practical, reason is that I'd had a car accident and I had to catch public transport to gigs, which is almost impossible as a drummer. So I needed a drum set that was the most I could carry. But the other thing is that I really hate hearing a full drum kit being played with no bass, or no second guitar. There's nothing to lock into with the kick drum.



Sam: If you've got a full drum kit and a guitar it feels like the guitar has to compromise what it does, in a bad way, or the drums have to compromise what they do, in a bad way. You're conditioned to listening to a drum kit playing with a traditional bass line. So we break what people are conditioned to hearing. We don't play with a full drum kit, which sounds totally different to a proper drum kit–so that's the rationale.

MRR: After the release of your first album, *Young, Tight and Alright*, in 2004 you toured the UK and continental Europe. What happened that night in England when Sam was hit in the face by a glass thrown by a member of the audience?

Sam: Some cunt threw a bottle at me after like two songs. We hadn't even said anything to the audience, just played and said the band name and where we were from. I guess he had a bit of anger in him. I bled like a pig too. I've never been cut so bad and I thought that it would be healed after a few minutes but it bleed for hours.

Andy: I saw something flying at the stage from the audience, but it's pretty common at our shows. We have a habit of spitting a lot, and so I guess people return the favor by throwing beer and glasses at us, but I didn't realize that the bottle had actually hit Sam in the jaw. It wasn't until he came over to sing into my microphone and bled on my drums that I realized he'd been cut. The guy that threw it cleared off pretty quickly, which was probably a good thing because a mate of mine who is a real tough cunt was there that night, and he was gagging to break a Londoner's face that night. Sam and I are pussies though.

MRR: Did the crowd respect you for continuing on with your set that night, despite bleeding profusely?

Sam: I guess so, 'cause we got invited to play in Copenhagen after that by a guy that was in the crowd and we have been friends ever since. And the people at the club never forgot us, so I guess we got some respect. It really wasn't that tough. It was just stupid, you know.

Andy: To be honest there weren't many people there, but we made friends with Henry Fiat's Open Sore that night, who are a shit-hot band from Stockholm, as well as our dear mate Jens from Copenhagen.

MRR: You didn't tour England during your 2005 tour. Did that have anything to do with the glass throwing incident?

Sam: Nah, it was just that the UK is a tough place to tour. Not many people come out to see bands that they haven't heard of. They get so spoiled with hyped bands and they all play everywhere in the UK, so why see a band that gets no media attention.

Andy: It was also partly to do with the fact that we were getting really good offers on the continent, and by the time we got some good offers for the UK, we had a full schedule. Next time we go over there, we'll do some shows in England and hopefully Scotland and Wales too, because we've had a little interest now.

MRR: How important do you think humor is to Digger and the Pussycats?

Sam: One thing about the Pussycats is that we don't try to be anything, we're just natural. We're just people who try and get a laugh out of people, even in our day-to-day lives.

Andy: We're both clowns; we give shit to people in the crowd, we give shit to ourselves, and it's good fun if people give shit to us as well. There's nothing better than a good heckler, it drives us to try and cut the fucker down. And most of the time we're just giving shit to ourselves. I still say fuck Melbourne. It's my favorite city in the world but fuck Melbourne. Some people don't understand that, but I'll say fuck you to anything or anyone. I mean we come from a country where you can call your best friend a cunt and it's totally normal. When we do it overseas, some people don't think it's funny, which in a sense makes it funnier for us. Like when you say "fuck you, cunt" to a serious German bloke, and he's just standing there trying to work out why you called him a cunt. He can see you smiling but he's not happy. He doesn't get the joke. Maybe we should pre-empt it with, "I'm going to say a funny joke right now. Are you ready?" and then it will work, but I guess that is just Australian humor. We're all cunts over here. Oh, and we have sex with koalas and stuff.

MRR: Has anyone ever gotten offended at your lyrics or onstage commentary?

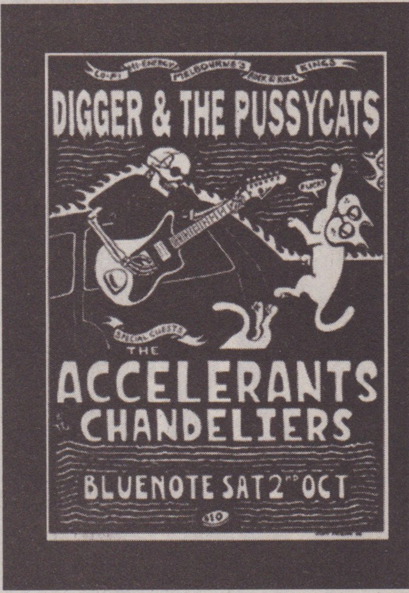
Andy: In Berlin some crusty old British prick was calling out during the set. So we just started paying out the English, saying what a bunch of soft cock cunts they are, and how when it's over 18 degrees they all take off their shirts and try to get sunburnt, and telling him that they sent all their scum to Australia and how the scum in Australia have kicked their arse at everything in the last 100 years, saved their arse in the war. He didn't take too kindly to that. Sometimes the truth hurts.

Sam: I think plenty of people have been offended by us, I guess they just don't come back to anymore shows so we never hear about it.

MRR: What's the story behind "Coming to Get You?"

Sam: I don't know. I guess I am a really shit driver and I wrote that song about myself. It is a bit about politics too, like a lot of that stuff revolves around driving and oil.

Andy: About politics? What a load of shit. You're always trying to intellectualize things, when really it's a song about road rage. Is that just an Australian tradition? We have this thing called road rage in Australia. Like if someone cuts you off or comes into your lane without looking, it is *your duty* to tail them for as long as you can and inflict fear into them. That's what the songs is about. Chasing down a bad driver with a piece of iron pipe in your hand, telling them they're driving like a cunt and if they don't pull their head in you'll hit them in the throat. Actually maybe that's too violent for us. I must say though, it's fucking hilarious to see people walking round with T-shirts that say "Drive Like a Cunt."



MRR: What do you say to people who're offended at the use of the C word?

Sam: I'm liberating the language.

Andy: It's also just who we are. If you've had a few beers and you call someone a cunt, it's just a loose use of the word in Melbourne, and especially with our friends it's used very liberally. So I guess our lyrics are very plain, very simple—we're not a political band, we couldn't give a shit about politics. We're just tryin' to tell a story, and we just try and sing using the words we'd use if we were talking to someone.

MRR: Does your sense of humor work in Europe?

Sam: In Europe the humor is a bit refreshing. There are so many bands that are so serious, and when I say serious I mean no jokes, only business.

Andy: Also there seems to be a lot of American bands in Europe that take themselves really fucking seriously, which is great, and a lot of the locals really like that, but when a band like us or the Black Lips or King Khan & the Shrines come to town, there's plenty of natives that seem to relish in being able to let their hair down for once. That said, there're heaps of places in Europe where the people are loose all the time, and put some of us less serious bands to shame with their antics.

MRR: European audiences can be obsessive about Australian music, especially independent Australian music that can be associated with bands like The Beasts of Bourbon, the Scientists, and the Birthday Party. Were you ever surprised at the familiarity of European audiences with your music, especially on your first tour?

Andy: Yeah, I found it kind of creepy. I mean at the time of our first tour our record wasn't available in Europe, yet there were some songs that the audience sang along to, and these were songs that weren't available as free download MP3s. I don't know how the fuck it happened, but it was kind of nice, because that sort of thing doesn't really happen at home for us. Either people had ordered our record on import, or they'd done that real old school thing and taped our songs off the radio or something, then learnt the words. There were of course plenty of people who came along expecting us to be the next Hard Ons or the next Radio Birdman, and I think it's pretty safe to say that those folks didn't come back on our second tour, because we don't really sound like any of the classic Australian rock and roll bands.

MRR: How did European audiences and the music media categorize your music?

Andy: It's kind of funny, but we were labeled as blues-punk on the first tour, but by the time we came round to the second tour, we were a garage band. I think that European audiences find us a frustrating band because we're difficult to categorize. We're far from a '60s band, we're not really punk, we're not garage, we're certainly not blues-punk (I hate that shit) and Jesus, I don't even know what primitive garage is. If people want to label us, that's fine. So long as we still get to tour and make records people can call us gothic two-step for all I care.

MRR: How do you think American audiences will react to your sense of humor?

Sam: I reckon it'd be a bit like in Europe, a bit hit or miss. I don't reckon it'll go too well in Utah. But we're not blasphemous or anything like that.

Andy: I reckon it'll be the same as everywhere else: some people will get it and others won't. Rather than having to call the French guys a bunch of "frogs," we'll be calling the Americans "Seppos." America certainly has some very good humored bands and some pretty mental television shows, so I think we'll find some likeminded dickheads over there that'll make us feel at home.

MRR: Your live show is very intense and physically demanding. How many times has Andy accidentally urinated during a show?

Andy: The other night at The Tote was the third time ever, but the first time in Australia. I did it twice last summer in France. When we play it's quite physically demanding. We don't just stand there and play, we jump around like burning spastics. To do that while singing in a smoky environment when you're half pissed your body loses control and that's what happens. The first time ever was pretty hilarious. It was at a show in Lille in a sweaty little cave on a 35 degree (Celsius) day and it was pretty crowded. I kind of blacked out just before the last song and when I came to I could smell piss and felt a warm sensation in my pants. I realized what was going on and stopped myself. I threw some beer over myself to neutralize the smell and started on the last song. We played it and went back to the dressing room. There was no toilet back there and I was about to piss in a bottle when the promoter came backstage, and asked for one more song. So we went out and did an encore. By the time we'd finished that I was fucking busting and tried to make it to the toilet out front but there were too many people, so I went backstage again and decided to piss out the window. I was kneeling on a bench and pissing through a grill onto the footpath outside the club when I heard some screams from outside. Sure enough I was pissing on the audience as they left the show. I think someone took a photo of me and my small penis.

MRR: I knew some amateur tri-athletes who had a similar incident after some intense training, so you're in good company.

Andy: It's really great to hear that. Now I know that I'm normal—I thought I might have some incontinence problem! I was worried the next time it was going to be number twos rather than number ones. You can't just throw a bit of water over your head and hope for the best!

MRR: When do you think you'll get to the United States?

Sam: Not too sure yet. I guess when we get the next record done then we'll start working out when we are gonna go where.

MRR: Hopefully there're no local statutes that prohibit pissing yourself on stage.

Andy: Some states have some pretty strange laws from what I hear. I guess we'll have to seek out local knowledge. I don't want my friends and family to see me on Cops.

MRR: When do you anticipate releasing your next album?

Sam: I reckon it will be around March/April 2007. Hopefully we can get our shit together by then.

Massmord

Massmord came from nowhere (well, from the south of Sweden) and unleashed an extremely powerful debut LP in early 2006 through several Nordic labels; Nakkeskudd Plater (Norway), Blindead Productions (Sweden), Fight Records (Finland), and Halvfabrikat Records (Sweden). Massmord might fall under the category of modern melodic crust: it's overall much faster than the average band playing a similar style. Massmord also share/has shared members with Deunga, Article Nine, Beyond Pink and Våning 5 to name a few, and they've brought their earlier experiences into this band, creating a varied and thought-through debut. Think Wolfbrigade and To What End? mixed with some From Ashes Rise and Kylesa. Questions by Krogh (www.attackfanzine.net) and answers by Sonny.

MRR: OK, let's get this interview going. Why don't you start by giving us a short presentation of the band?

Sonny: Massmord consists of Sonny (me, vocals), Tijana (vocals), Andreas (guitar), Berra (bass), Ida (guitar), and Olof (drums). We started sometime in the fall of 2004 in Helsingborg, which is located in the south of Sweden.

MRR: You all have a pretty long background of playing in other bands, some whom are still going. How did Massmord start?

Sonny: Yeah, we've all played in bands before but only one of them is still around, and that's Beyond Pink. I guess that was one of the contributing factors in who became Massmord eventually. Everyone wanted to play in a band again. It all got started when I moved to Helsingborg from Malmö. Ida, Olof and I talked about getting together and playing, and we started to rehearse in Olof's laundry room. Shortly after Berra came into the picture, as Olof had asked if he was interested in playing bass. Berra and Olof had earlier played together in Article Nine. After a while Tijana joined, who's in Beyond Pink together with Ida, and we had to move out of the laundry room. We found a rehearsal space and started to rehearse more seriously. After a long search for a second guitarist we found Andreas.

MRR: How fast did you get some material together after all the members had come together? Was the LP recording was your first, or was there a demo before this?

Sonny: It went pretty fast. Ida and I already had some songs ready before we started to rehearse together as a band, and the rest of the songs were finished shortly after. We had made fifteen songs when we decided to record them. We chose to skip a couple of songs though. From the start it was meant to be a demo and we were ready to make tapes and CD-R's to send out. But we didn't have to send out very many copies of the demo as Stian at Nakkeskudd got hooked right away, so we decided not to release it as traditional demo. Instead we put all the songs on our website so that people could download them. So we actually never really released a demo.

MRR: You took the words from my mouth-I was just about to ask you about those mp3s. Were you ever afraid that the record wouldn't sell as well or get less interesting because of this?

Sonny: I don't know about the other members of the band, but sure, I could feel a little worried. But at the same time it was our first release and we hadn't played out much before the record was released either. So we chose to put them there and simply hope for the best. Now in retrospect I feel we did the right choice as the record after all has sold very well.

MRR: The LP we're talking about, *Inget Liv/Ingen Död* was released late in January and has received very good feedback from around the world. How do you experience its reception and what were your expectations?

Sonny: I've heard only good things about the record and that of course feels very good and encouraging. I don't think we had very big expectations to be honest. Sure, we ourselves thought the record turned out very good, even if I now afterwards know we can do a lot better and maybe it all went a bit too fast. But at the same time we've learned a lot from this release and have grown as a band. But I don't think anyone in the band thought it would turn as well as it has.

MRR: You've been on a trip to Germany, played some shows here and there in Sweden, and now you are planning a mini-tour. Are there plans for a bigger and longer tour, or do you want some more releases behind you first?

Sonny: Germany? Where have you gotten that false information from? Sure, it's been some gigs here and there in Sweden, even if it hasn't been as many as we've wanted. We've had to cancel a few gigs too that we would've liked to play. The mini-tour will be fun even it only is three days, but then we're heading out in Europe in August if everything goes according to plan. We've already had lots of problems with that European tour, so now we're doing all we can to actually go. I think our songs have been widely spread thanks to us having them on the website for so long, and because our LP has gotten such a wide distribution. So I think a tour will work out well despite just having one release under our belts.

MRR: There were some talking about following up *Inget Liv/Ingen Död* with a split 7" before it's time for another full-length album. Is this still the plan?
Sonny: Yes, that's still the plan. It will be released by Nakkeskudd Plater but it's still too soon to say if it's actually going to be released before the next full-length or not. That would've been best though. Personally, I look forward to a split 7". I've always liked the idea of two bands sharing a record. But then there seem to be a lot more people not liking this idea.

MRR: It seems like splits and compilations aren't as enticing anymore. Do you think people want an LP in their hands and mp3s for the occasional track?
Sonny: I don't know. But I think there's a big paradox when it comes to split 7"s, compilations, and stuff like that. I think it's great just to do stuff together and contribute in releasing a compilation or benefit. But then again, I can understand if one has released a record and has lots of money tied up in it and therefore wants the money back as quickly as possible. You don't want to lose money, but often it feels like it's too much business and too little punk. I could be wrong, but it can feel as though it's more important to release as many records as possible than it is to help good bands get their music out.

MRR: But at the same time, you can't sell too much because then the "sellout" fingers are being pointed. It's not quite as black and white, but there are a lot of unwritten rules in punk. Have you ever been the target of some nasty rumor that just wouldn't die, or has anyone believed themselves to know stuff about you without really knowing anything?
Sonny: Yeah, exactly. This can be discussed forever I think. No matter how much we want to create our own scene from our own needs, it can't be avoided that reality shines through now and then. We haven't experienced any rumors yet though, at least not me. But I guess that could come too. But I hope we can get away from it, as it's boring and unnecessary.

MRR: Yeah it sure is, and therefore we return to more pleasant stuff. You're currently working on new tracks for that split we mentioned earlier, as well as for your next LP. All members have been more involved in the writing than before; how does this show in the material? Is it more fun to rehearse now?
Sonny: I think it's more clearly showing in the songs now, as more people than just Ida and myself are involved. I personally think our new songs are much better and more thought-through than the ones on *Inget Liv/Ingen Död*. Since everyone in the band has very different musical tastes, it contributes to there being more influences involved when we write songs. That in turn probably makes them more interesting to listen to. When it comes to rehearsing, it's always fun, but of course it's even more fun if everyone in the band takes an active role in what you do. I think it's important that all of us feel we participate in what we do.

MRR: Yeah, bigger participation leads to the band working better and that the bonds get tighter. This leads me on to your lyrics: are you as involved there as with the music?
Sonny: Absolutely. That's why I play in a band, to achieve stuff together and feel a collective strength that can be hard to find in everyday life. When it comes to the lyrics, I think they've become better too. Tijana has started to write more lyrics and I think that's good. On our first LP it was mainly my lyrics that were used, but it will be more mixed on future releases. Here also I feel it's important that everyone get to express his or her feelings and creativity. We are after all six different persons and therefore I think it's only natural that each is given the same space in writing lyrics. Then maybe not everyone wants to write, but that's another thing.

MRR: You switch between writing lyrics in English and Swedish; does this depend on how the inspiration comes, or do you think some issues are more international and therefore chose to write in English?
Sonny: On my part it depends very much on how the inspiration comes. On the new songs, there are mostly English lyrics and I honestly don't

know why that is. Some topics are simply easier to write about in Swedish, but I still prefer to write in English. It feels as if it's possible to reach more people that way-even if we write explanations to all the lyrics, it is not really the same thing. The whole feeling you're trying to put forth with a lyric is lost. I find the lyrics to be really important so I try to write as many as I can in English.

MRR: You have a pretty wide spectrum when it comes to the content of the lyrics, and even though most topics already have been touched in other punk songs, I feel yours still have some originality, and several that are long, which also separates them from many other bands'. How do you view you lyrics in terms of content?
Sonny: I think that it differs a lot, depending on who's written the lyric. But overall our lyrics deal with anything from political events to everyday and personal experiences. We write about everything that happens around us, both distant and near. I think our strength lies in that we are so different, and therefore hit a pretty wide spectrum on our lyrics and music.

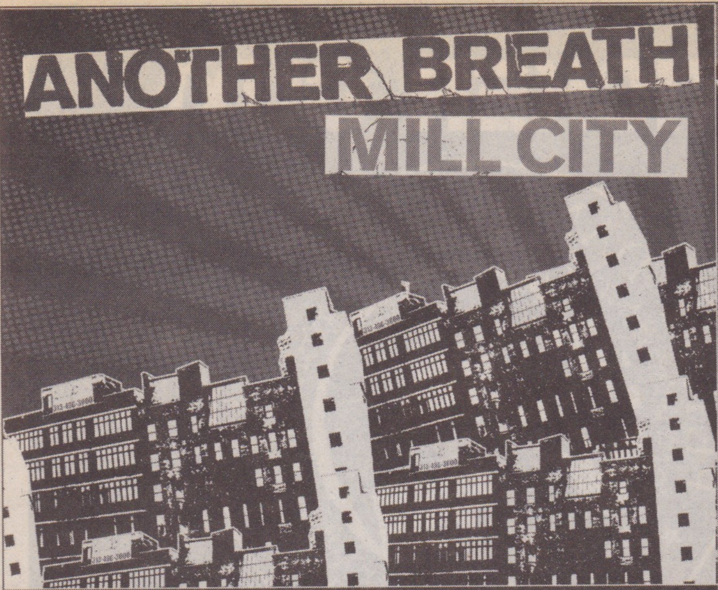
MRR: When you write your lyrics, do you consider that there are two people sharing the vocal duties and adapt? Are there topics that are closer to either your or Tijana's hearts, and because of this are sung more by the person in question?
Sonny: No, I've never though that way. We usually work out the vocal patterns after the lyrics are done and work through it together to see what fits best. I think the lyrics I write are closer to my heart than with Tijana, and the other way around when she's written one. We try to always divide the vocals as evenly as possible between us.

MRR: Speaking about writing, you also run the webzine *Rise and Subvert*. How long have you been doing that one?
Sonny: Yeah, I started *Rise and Subvert* together with a friend in Stockholm who later withdrew. So you could say it started to work as a zine in the fall of 2005.

MRR: You're also involved with the band Aktiv Dödshjälp. But you're not a steady member yet are you?
Sonny: That's correct. From the start it was like this: Ida and I helped Aktiv Dödshjälp in releasing a CD-R (*En Tid Av Smärta och Förnedring*) through our distro, Chased By Fear, which doesn't exist anymore. Then we played our very first gig with them, and I've had a good connection with Tompa in Aktiv Dödshjälp since. So when it all went to hell with Aktiv Dödshjälp and everyone but Tompa quit he asked if I wanted to help sing on the next recording. Of course I wanted to help out a friend in need. How the future looks for Aktiv Dödshjälp I'll leave unsaid. We'll just have to wait and see what happens after we're recorded and released the next record. Massmord are my main priority and it will always be in the first room.

MRR: Yet again you help me in getting on with the next question; I was just about to return to the subject of Massmord. We're a good team, haha. As we do this interview, *Inget Liv/Ingen Död* is only available on LP, but both CD and tape issues are planned. When are these coming?
Sonny: Haha, definitely. Crimes Against Humanity will release the CD, and according to the website it'll come in the end of April, so by the time you are reading this. I'm really looking forward to that. I'm not completely sure when the tape will come, but probably before summer if all goes according the plan.

MRR: OK, that's all I had for you, I think. Is there anything you feel like adding that hasn't been brought up yet? If not, feel free to finish this any way you find appropriate. Good luck with everything!
Sonny: Thank you very much for the interview. As I wrote earlier, you can download all the tracks on *Inget Liv/Ingen Död* off our website www.massmord.net in case you don't want to or can't afford to buy it.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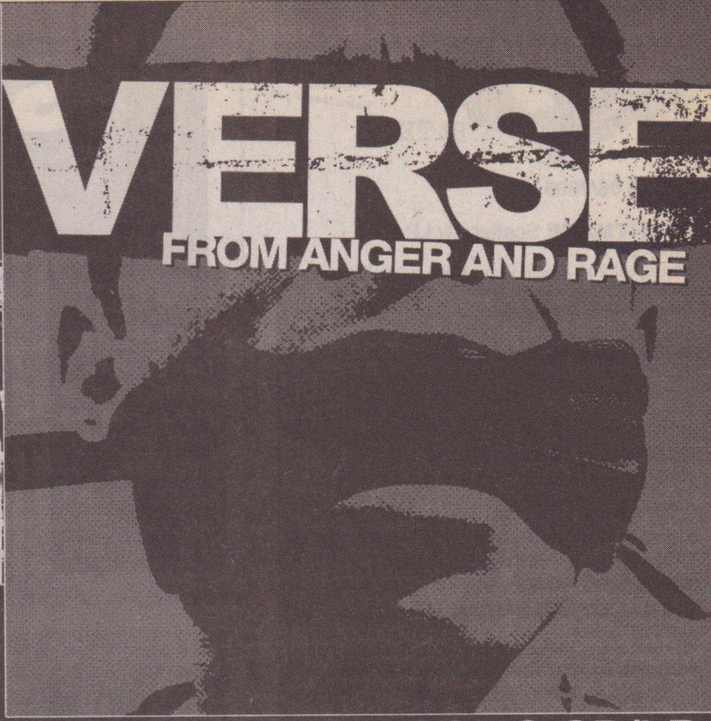
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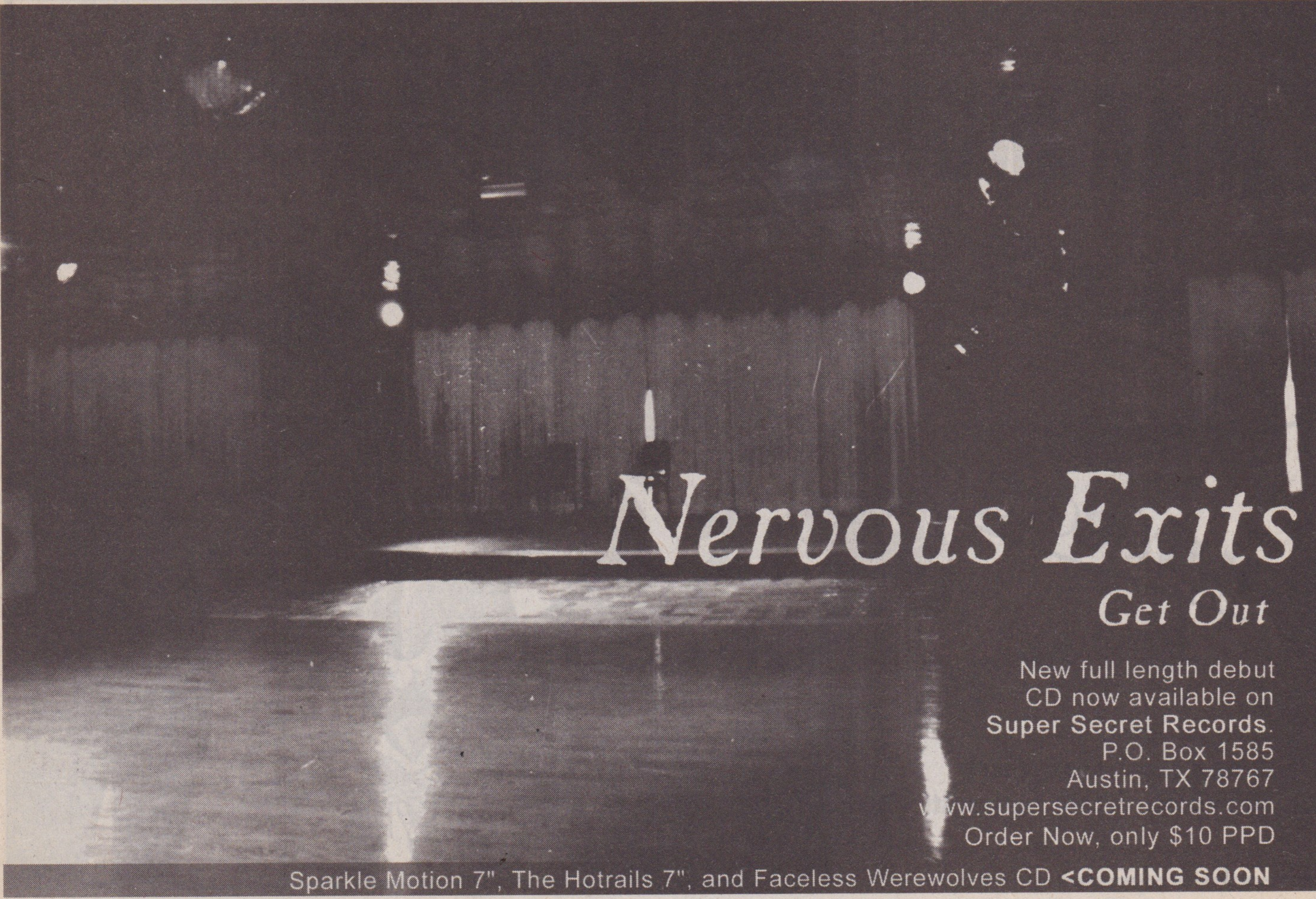

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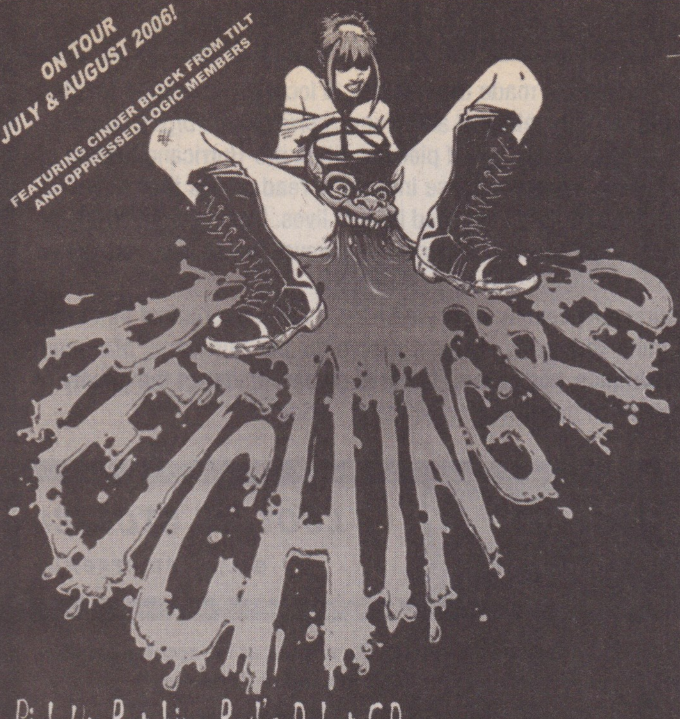

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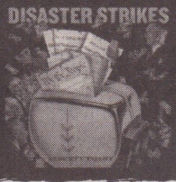

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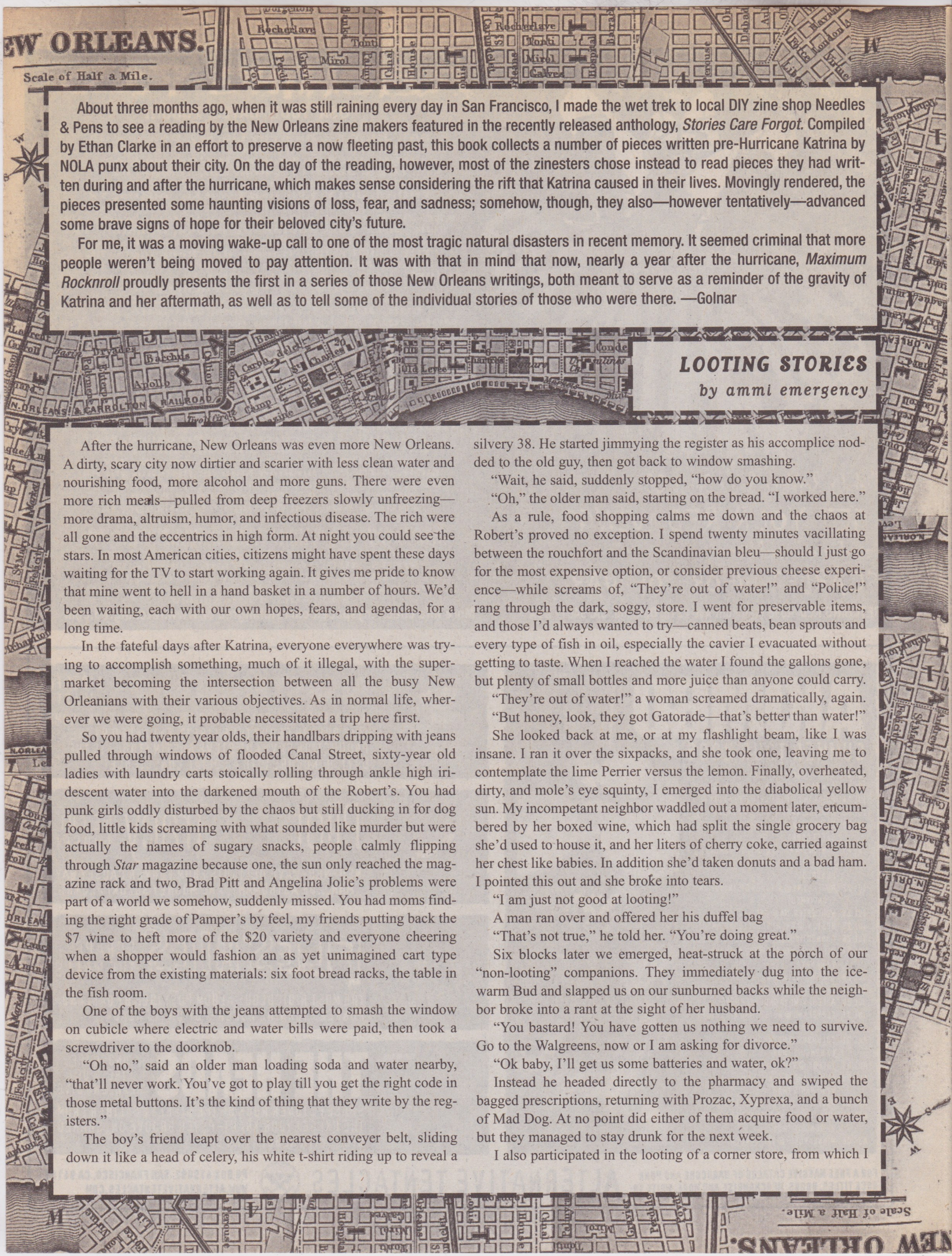


About three months ago, when it was still raining every day in San Francisco, I made the wet trek to local DIY zine shop Needles & Pens to see a reading by the New Orleans zine makers featured in the recently released anthology, *Stories Care Forgot.* Compiled by Ethan Clarke in an effort to preserve a now fleeting past, this book collects a number of pieces written pre-Hurricane Katrina by NOLA punx about their city. On the day of the reading, however, most of the zinesters chose instead to read pieces they had written during and after the hurricane, which makes sense considering the rift that Katrina caused in their lives. Movingly rendered, the pieces presented some haunting visions of loss, fear, and sadness; somehow, though, they also—however tentatively—advanced some brave signs of hope for their beloved city's future.

For me, it was a moving wake-up call to one of the most tragic natural disasters in recent memory. It seemed criminal that more people weren't being moved to pay attention. It was with that in mind that now, nearly a year after the hurricane, *Maximum Rocknroll* proudly presents the first in a series of those New Orleans writings, both meant to serve as a reminder of the gravity of Katrina and her aftermath, as well as to tell some of the individual stories of those who were there. —Golnar

LOOTING STORIES

by ammi emergency

After the hurricane, New Orleans was even more New Orleans. A dirty, scary city now dirtier and scarier with less clean water and nourishing food, more alcohol and more guns. There were even more rich meals—pulled from deep freezers slowly unfreezing—more drama, altruism, humor, and infectious disease. The rich were all gone and the eccentrics in high form. At night you could see the stars. In most American cities, citizens might have spent these days waiting for the TV to start working again. It gives me pride to know that mine went to hell in a hand basket in a number of hours. We'd been waiting, each with our own hopes, fears, and agendas, for a long time.

In the fateful days after Katrina, everyone everywhere was trying to accomplish something, much of it illegal, with the supermarket becoming the intersection between all the busy New Orleanians with their various objectives. As in normal life, wherever we were going, it probable necessitated a trip here first.

So you had twenty year olds, their handlbars dripping with jeans pulled through windows of flooded Canal Street, sixty-year old ladies with laundry carts stoically rolling through ankle high iridescent water into the darkened mouth of the Robert's. You had punk girls oddly disturbed by the chaos but still ducking in for dog food, little kids screaming with what sounded like murder but were actually the names of sugary snacks, people calmly flipping through *Star* magazine because one, the sun only reached the magazine rack and two, Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie's problems were part of a world we somehow, suddenly missed. You had moms finding the right grade of Pamper's by feel, my friends putting back the $7 wine to heft more of the $20 variety and everyone cheering when a shopper would fashion an as yet unimagined cart type device from the existing materials: six foot bread racks, the table in the fish room.

One of the boys with the jeans attempted to smash the window on cubicle where electric and water bills were paid, then took a screwdriver to the doorknob.

"Oh no," said an older man loading soda and water nearby, "that'll never work. You've got to play till you get the right code in those metal buttons. It's the kind of thing that they write by the registers."

The boy's friend leapt over the nearest conveyer belt, sliding down it like a head of celery, his white t-shirt riding up to reveal a silvery 38. He started jimmying the register as his accomplice nodded to the old guy, then got back to window smashing.

"Wait, he said, suddenly stopped, "how do you know."

"Oh," the older man said, starting on the bread. "I worked here."

As a rule, food shopping calms me down and the chaos at Robert's proved no exception. I spend twenty minutes vacillating between the rouchfort and the Scandinavian bleu—should I just go for the most expensive option, or consider previous cheese experience—while screams of, "They're out of water!" and "Police!" rang through the dark, soggy, store. I went for preservable items, and those I'd always wanted to try—canned beats, bean sprouts and every type of fish in oil, especially the cavier I evacuated without getting to taste. When I reached the water I found the gallons gone, but plenty of small bottles and more juice than anyone could carry.

"They're out of water!" a woman screamed dramatically, again.

"But honey, look, they got Gatorade—that's better than water!"

She looked back at me, or at my flashlight beam, like I was insane. I ran it over the sixpacks, and she took one, leaving me to contemplate the lime Perrier versus the lemon. Finally, overheated, dirty, and mole's eye squinty, I emerged into the diabolical yellow sun. My incompetant neighbor waddled out a moment later, encumbered by her boxed wine, which had split the single grocery bag she'd used to house it, and her liters of cherry coke, carried against her chest like babies. In addition she'd taken donuts and a bad ham. I pointed this out and she broke into tears.

"I am just not good at looting!"

A man ran over and offered her his duffel bag

"That's not true," he told her. "You're doing great."

Six blocks later we emerged, heat-struck at the porch of our "non-looting" companions. They immediately dug into the ice-warm Bud and slapped us on our sunburned backs while the neighbor broke into a rant at the sight of her husband.

"You bastard! You have gotten us nothing we need to survive. Go to the Walgreens, now or I am asking for divorce."

"Ok baby, I'll get us some batteries and water, ok?"

Instead he headed directly to the pharmacy and swiped the bagged prescriptions, returning with Prozac, Xyprexa, and a bunch of Mad Dog. At no point did either of them acquire food or water, but they managed to stay drunk for the next week.

I also participated in the looting of a corner store, from which I took mint gin. That corner store is open again and the man who runs is has such great sense of humor I'm temped to tell him I was in there after hours, helping to distribute baby food—well, I yelled, "hey everyone, there's baby food!"—while making off with disgusting liquor.

But I think it would be an awkward moment, surprisingly intimate, like telling someone, "Remember me? We dated in college?"

There's a point to me, somehow, about everyone being connected: all the people who couldn't afford the things they were told to want, and all the things they needed. And all the buinesnesses large and small who got trashed, and the politicians moralizing and briefly, for a few glorious weeks, capitalism actually taking a backseat to human beings. I wanted to tell you about the mint gin because I want you to feel complicit. We all make this world, and we all have to live in it.

In the darkened supermarket, I remember swinging my flashlight to help a small child who'd been frantically calling, "Where's the hot sauce at?"

"Right here," I showed him. "But honey, what are you going to put it on?"

The metaphor of a hot sauce with nothing to put it on is apt and while is isn't the whole story—my other favorite looter was a ten-year old fat kid, his arms loaded Chef Boyardee and CocoPuffs—I came to realize this level of impracticality, multiplied by the population of the city as a whole, could get messy. So I left two days later, with five other humans and six animals in a stolen van through a city wrenched with anguish and gunplay. This storm shook up a Blue city and spread it all over the Red south. But I wondeed what was going to happen when those who'd opened up their homes, churches, and hotels to us realized we intended to use the hospitality to do drugs, have homosexual sex, and, occasionally, write postmodern poetry. People might just start listening to each other, that's what I think. In all this sorrow I can't help but feel an intermittent bright crazy hope.

*

Thanks to everyone who helped out people from NOLA, and to those who supported us on our *Stories Care Forgot* New Orleans zine anthology tour—the book is available in bookstores from Last Gasp. I do a zine called *Emergency*. It's $2 to Ammi, 831 Elysian Fields, PO Box 259, New Orleans, LA 70117. Oh and thanks in advance for cool emails: ammi@softskull.com

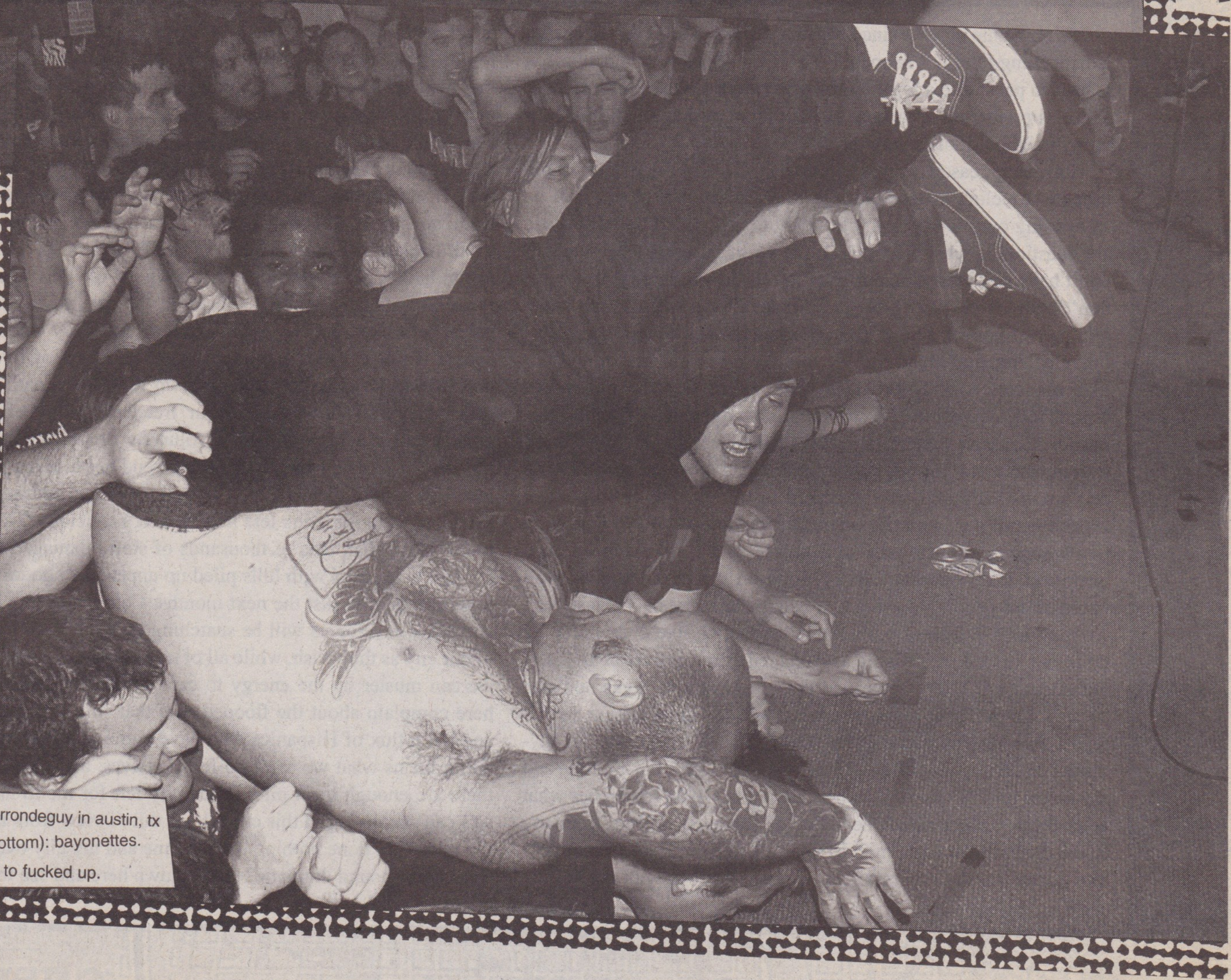
WHAT'S GOING ON?

by shelley jackson

It's now nine months since Katrina. I want to tell everyone what is happening (and not happening) here but there is so much and it is hard to put it into a logical order. So here's a pile of information, about as pretty and organized as the pile of garbage I still bike by in my neighborhoods every day…

Hurricane season started again just six days ago and it has brought a feeling of tension back into the air. Where many of us were using our manic energy to rebuild our flooded lives, now we are questioning why. Why put all the effort into this when we still don't have any idea what our lives in this city will hold? When we don't know if the next great flood is an if or a when? With some glimmer of hope we have spent the last months rebuilding, clearing, cleaning, and repairing. We re-elected our old mayor and felt like we were making progress while every day the newspaper reports how unprepared we still are for the impending doom of this hurricane season. Levees are still in disrepair, others have been over repaired leaving previously safe areas more vulnerable. The city's pumps are still only expected to be working at 30 percent capacity until next summer when their pumping abilities will jump to a whopping 60 percent. Vulnerable. It is a word overused. And on top of that, the paper also reports on the psychological well being of our people, warning that due to the stress of this last year, we may feel "a lack of motivation, depressed, like everything we do is an extra effort." We are as damaged as our infrastructure, and not one person I know can read those lists of symptoms and say, "That's not me." For me, I have never felt so vulnerable, so in disrepair. It is hard for me to get anything done, to see the use in anything I could do to rebuild my life. I just moved for the 5th time and my boxes now lay unpacked, because I don't even remember what is in them since I filled them full of salvaged objects from my flooded apartment eight months ago. It's like building a sandcastle in a rainstorm; my progress feels chipped away at with every little move. But that is where we are all at. The national news has all but forgotten about us other than stories of cities worrying about what they will do when we all come knocking on their doors this summer. Our local government just unveiled plans to build a new City Hall and Jazz Park, which includes, of all things, two levels of underground parking. It is absurd. Absurd because while the mayor (yes, I voted for him) builds himself a new castle to pretend to reign from, housing is still so difficult to come by that people are renting small houses that used to rent for 4-500 dollars for 1200 and up, just to have a place to work and survive out of. This lifestyle made sense for people like me, us, back in the day, when we shared a house built like a hallway with no doors or privacy with three other people because 150 a month rent gave one a lot of freedom. But now we do that just to get rent down to 400 a month each. And sadly, this doesn't just effect our freedoms to travel and move around, but it effects all of the volunteer organizations that were run by people who had extra time to spend because our rent was so low. Now, out of towners run a lot of these organizations, and locals get a bad wrap for being less involved. It's a vicious cycle. And, on top of all of that, tens of thousands of storm damaged homes that are still untouched with bills piled up unpaid will go on sale to the highest bidder in just the next months. Companies like Haliburton and other developers will be snatching them up to reshape the life of our city as they wish, while all of us locals sit by, wondering how we can muster up the energy to care anymore. So while the rich here complain about the flooded cars that still clog public spaces and the influx of Hispanics who have come to work their asses of doing for us what we can't do for ourselves, all I can hope is that there are enough trash piles in the city left for me to hide behind, so I can stay living in this city I love, out of view from the government that has done nothing but fuck me and my city over since we were born. Sound dramatic? Come down here and see for yourself.

XENOPHOBIA



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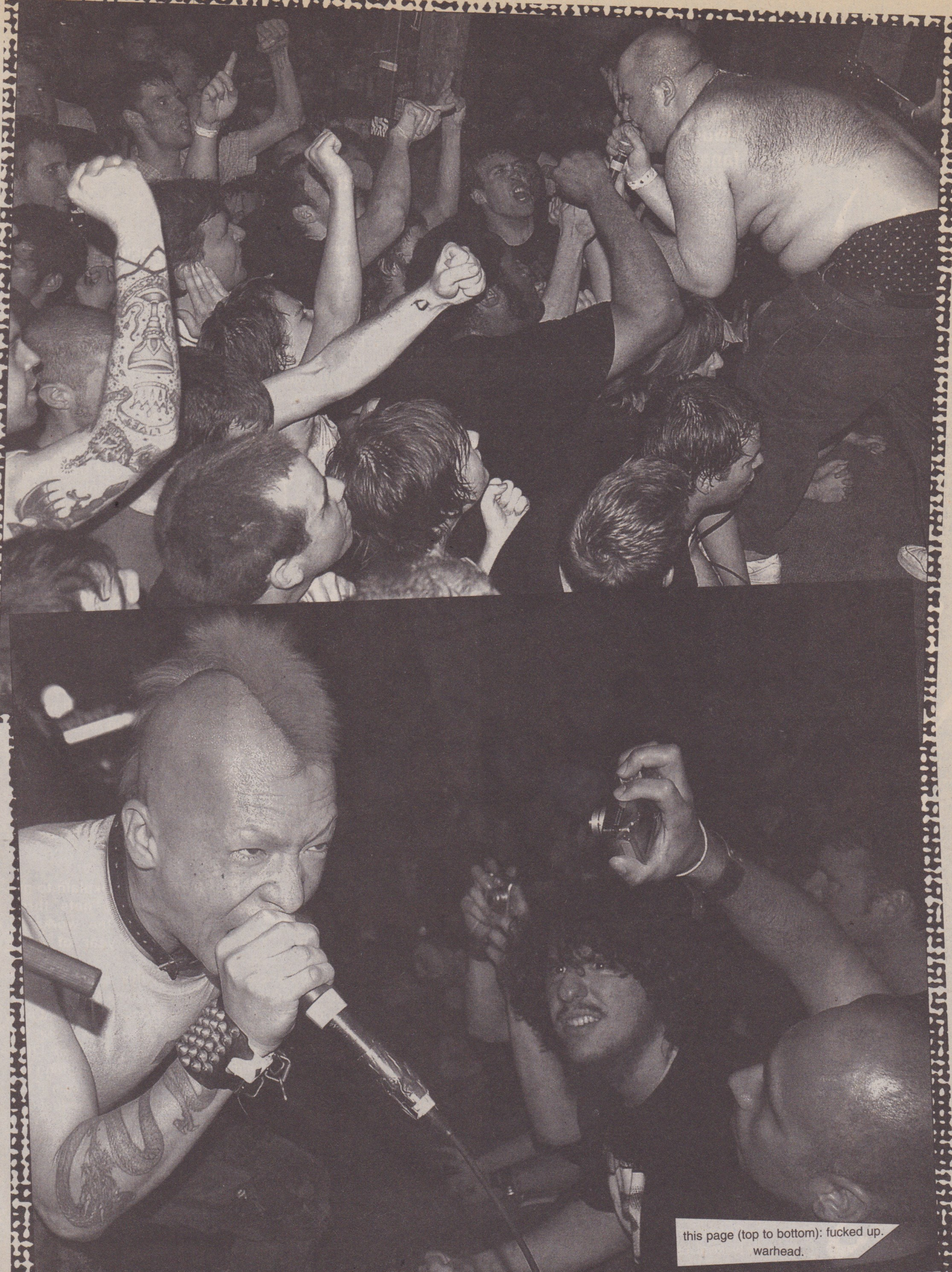

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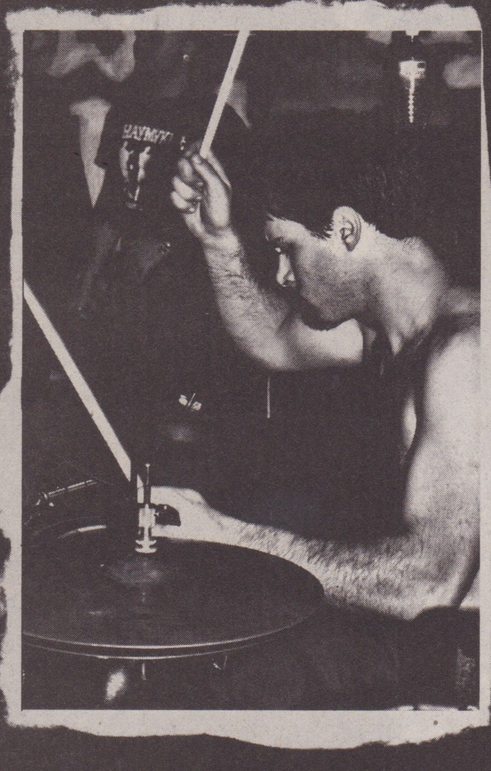
warhead.

insect warfare

The perfect formula for grindcore: an intense drummer totally possessed by the blast beat demons, a shredding guitar whiz obsessed with precise fast riffing, a lurking evil bass growl, and an arrogant vocalist with incredible vocal range who hates the world as much as he is hated himself. From this formula we have Houston, Texas' Insect Warfare. Here they are in their first ever interview. Grind fanatics take notice, these jokers have a lot to say. Interview by Josh "Wolf" and Richard Dick. Photos by Misha Burgett and Old HC Dude.

MRR: Tell me who is in the band, where are you from, and what you do.
Rahi: Rahi, vocals, I'm from Alief man.
Beau: Beau, guitar and bass, from Houston.
Frank: Frank, uh ... uh ....
Rahi: You play drums dude.
Frank: Yeah, I play drums. The bass drum dude.
MRR: You're from Houston right?
Frank:Oh yeah, I'm from Houston.



MRR: How did you guys discover grindcore and what bands did you guys listen to make you decide to play grindcore?
Beau: I guess, like a lot of people probably, the first bands I listened to were Carcass and Napalm Death, classic bands. About some time in early high school days I discovered the Relapse mail order catalog and they had a very good distro. I ordered a lot of records from them as well as other places like Vacuum that had more obscure grind bands and got heavy into death metal and thrash metal as well. After that I was pretty much hooked. Napalm Death, Terrorizer, Repulsion, and Brutal Truth became big influences on me musically and made me want to play grindcore.
Rahi: Man, back in the day, I saw this Best Buy commercial, and it had this fucking head banger dude in his room head banging and he said, "If they have Carcass, I'll cut my hair!" and then they showed a picture of that dude holding up a Carcass CD with a shaved head and I figure, yeah, I'll go there. So I went to Best Buy and I bought Carcass *Heartwork* and Napalm Death *Fear, Emptiness, and Despair*. I guess those are the first grind related albums I heard.
Frank: The first grind I got into was from Dave of Pretty Little Flower. I was like 14, I met him at a Voo Doo Glow Skulls show at Fitzgerald's and then he stayed at my house and made me some tapes the next day. It had Dropdead, Man Is The Bastard, Spazz, and all sorts of West Coast shit. It was pretty cool ever since then. Just made tapes and listened to grindcore.

MRR: Do you guys have any other outside influences other than grindcore?
Rahi: Thrash metal, fast hardcore, and a lot of Houston bands, like DRI, Verbal Abuse, Bark Hard, Snot, Dresden-45, and Deadhorse.
Beau: I listen to a lot of different stuff. Like I said, a lot of early death metal. I know Rahi and I are both into older thrash metal bands like Razor, Sarcafago, and stuff like that. I like a lot of modern stuff, crossover, powerviolence, and '80s hardcore. Basically anything that is loud, fast, and distorted is stuff that I am into.
Frank: Puddle of Mud and shit too bro. Don't forget that!

MRR: Alright Rahi, how do you feel about your already hated reputation in your first year of existence as a band?
Rahi: People, sometimes they get jealous dude. They get caught in up in how they look and the way the get perceived by others and they start talking shit and hatin'. You know, I never fucked nobody over but everybody's out to fuck me over. (pause) Whatever man....

MRR: Beau, explain to me how a band gets three records in the works in their first year of existence?
Beau: You know, Iguess with this band, the first record is out on 625 because I knew Max from my previous band, Machine Gun Romantics. I sent him our demo so basically he could review it for his Mosh of Ass column in *Short, Fast, and Loud*. I didn't even expect him to care about it or anything but I guess he ended up liking it and asked us if we would like to do a record. So that is how the first one came about. The second record, which is a split with other Houston band Hatred Surge, came out a few months ago.

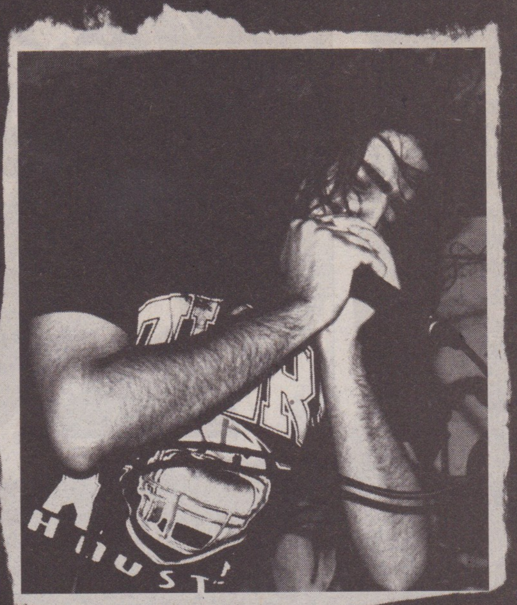
When we recorded for the 625 EP we also recorded five extra songs and I began to write labels to find someone who was interested in helping release this split. Eventually RSR Records from Germany responded and agreed. So that's how that record came about. And finally, a friend of ours in Houston was putting together a compilation focusing on the gulf coast called the *Gulf Coast Massacre*, which would feature a bunch of different bands from the region. He asked us to be on it and we thankfully agreed because he was the first person to agree to release some of our music. That record is out of print on the Psycho Wolf record label.

MRR: So lots of networking and stuff?
Beau: Yeah, I guess it's just knowing people and stuff. Basically, that's what a lot of this shit boils down to. It's basically who you know, which is kind of unfortunate because some bands don't get the breaks they should. It kind of sucks but it has worked out for us though I still don't think it is right.

MRR: Who are some of your current favorite bands?
Rahi: A lot of the bands out of the Osaka grind scene like Red, Maggut, World, Diborce—bands like that.
Frank: Some of my favorite bands right now are Cripple Bastards, Gride, Red, Terrorizer.
Beau: I don't think Terrorizer is a current band. (laughter)
Frank: I thought you were asking about bands I am listening to currently.

MRR: No Frank, but that's a good answer. I guess.
Beau: I listen to a lot of different stuff. I guess on the less grind side of things I have been listening to the latest Crime Desire record a lot. It has some really cool Agnostic Front and Cro Mags sounding parts without sounding tough guy or stupid. It is a very rad and unique record. On the grind side of things I am really focused on the Japanese scene. I listen to a lot of those bands. I am very intrigued by the Red demo because they are incredible and such a mysterious band and there is very little information about them available. I am also a big fan of their singer's former band World, so I am excited that he is still grinding. I like Widespread Bloodshed a lot. I think they totally rule and are fast as shit. I don't know, too many bands to mention. I am an avid record collector and I try buy one of each new record that comes out but there are so many that I get lost from time to time. Mainly, though, I focus on the Japanese stuff like Bolt Stein, Fortitude, and Diborce.

MRR: Speaking of bands, what are the top three bands that would be on your ideal Insect Warfare tour? Past or present, genre does not matter.
Rahi: GISM, Repulsion, and James Brown, man.
Beau: I will break mine up between past and present. Past would be Brutal Truth *Extreme Conditions* era, Repulsion anytime, and probably the Canadian thrash band Razor around the time of their *Violent Restitution* album because it is a big influence on the Insect Warfare sound. They are not a grind band but they have the best riffs ever! As far as new bands I am going to stick strictly to Japan so I can make it easier on myself. I would like to tour with Red, Bolt Stein, and Damage Digital. Maybe Maggut or DxIxE as well. Fuck it.
Frank: I guess I would say, Red, Gride, and Splatterhouse.



MRR: Is there any political involvement in Insect Warfare?
Rahi: I wouldn't call Insect Warfare political at all. To me, political just means persuasion. Like trying to pull someone over to your side. If I cared about something that might have a political edge, it might be involved with Insect Warfare, but it's not a serious part of Insect Warfare. I think they should legalize weed, that's pretty political, I love to smoke weed. I'd write a song about smoking weed.
Frank: The band is not politics at all. The band is all about smoking weed.

MRR: Everybody? Is the band entirely potheads?
Frank: No, Beau doesn't smoke but he's pro weed.
Beau: Yeah, I'm totally pro weed.

MRR: That's very commendable.
Rahi: Just because you're straight edge doesn't mean you cannot be pro weed.
Beau: I really don't think that in this band, or heavy metal really, how politics fit in. Sometimes politics take the fun out of it for me. I just want to have a good time, I don't want to be preached to.

MRR: Do you politics have any place in grindcore? Like fellow Houston grinders PLF?
Rahi: Dave PLF, those are the things he cares about. Those are issues he involves his life with, and his band is part of his life too. If I'm not all about that shit, why should I pretend to be? I'm from the fucking ghetto man, I don't give a fuck about shit, it doesn't affect me.
Frank: I'm in PLF. I used to be political but now I have bigger things to worry about. I see the point of being a political band, and being grindcore and everything, but I got bigger things to worry about.

MRR: What is the short term or immediate goals of Insect Warfare in the next year?
Rahi: To put out records, do tours, play shows, grind, and have fun.

MRR: Tour where?
Rahi: Wherever man, everywhere.

MRR: What are the long-term goals for Insect Warfare?
Beau: Not be like Agathocles.

MRR: Meaning?
Beau: I mean not to put out a flood of mediocre records just for sake of doing it. I would rather put out a few records each year and really invest some time in the music and recordings. Our other goal is to go to Japan someday.
Rahi: Tour, put out records. Just keep

doing the same old shit. I'll be the same dude I am now ten years from now. What I want ten years from is no different than what I am going to want next year.
Frank: The only plan is to grind.

MRR: When you talk about Agathocles, do you mean you are not going to recycle the same songs on a bunch of different records?
Beau: I hope I am not coming off like Agathocles is not important. I mean, I own a lot of their records, but, there has been too many records by those bands the past couple of years—it is just too much. When you think of classic albums like Entombed's *Left Hand Path*, you think of a well-rounded, well-written record. That's all I want. I want to focus our energies on a few good songs instead 100 mediocre songs.

MRR: Lets talk some records. I understand that between the three of you, you have some pretty sick vinyl. What do you have?
Beau: I'm a record nerd man. I dunno.

MRR: Come on, give me some top fives.
Rahi: I guess I can brag about my gems that I have, the records that everyone talks about. The classic early Earache shit. My favorite kind of shit is old Brazilian Cogumelo Records kind of shit. That probably my favorite stuff to collect as far as vinyl goes.
Beau: Yeah, I am hardcore record collector so I have lots of records that I could mention but I know if I mention five now I will regret not mentioning 400 others later tonight. I have a lot of the early Earache grind stuff, all original presses. Lots of old thrash metal, lots of old death metal, lots of KBD punk and hardcore, and all sorts of other bullshit. I don't like to disclose what I have too much because I don't want nobody stealing my shit.

MRR: Enough about the records, what are some top five favorite bands?
Beau: any genre?

MRR: Anything.
Frank: old Anthrax, old Metallica, Cripple Bastards, Unholy Grave, and uh, Terrorizer.
Rahi: Repulsion demo '86, Bolt Thrower *Second Peel Session 11/88*, Razor *Violent Restitution*, Demolition Hammer *Necrology* demo, and Isley Brothers *Go For Your Guns* LP.
Beau: Cryptic Slaughter *Convicted* LP, Brutal Truth *Extreme Conditions..*, Razor *Violent Restitution*, Infest *Slave*, and S.O.B. *Don't Be Swindle*. There are so many.

MRR: Man, you guys are so specific on the records and years.
Rahi: Yeah, a year a is just as important to me as a band's name or the album title. That shit is important. a band could have ruled in 1989 but sucked bad in 1990. With so many records and tours, you have to mention the years so you can know when a band was bad ass.
Beau: Shit, I forgot, the Nihilist demos. Dammit.
Rahi: Make it a top ten, dude.
Beau: Yeah, I could go on forever about this shit. This is the only information I care about. Shit, Attitude Adjustment *American paranoia*. It will never stop.

MRR: Since nobody mentioned Chaos Horde, I am going to mention them.
Beau: (laughs) Yeah, slipped on that shit. Classic.
MRR: Any shout outs to anyone through out the world?
Rahi: Is this just like name dropping everyone I know? All my homies, my roll call? Because I mean like, thanks to everybody because everybody does their share. I mean, I am sure there are people I have not met throughout the world who are grind guys like me that just want to play grind and go to shows and have fun. We all have the same goals, everybody's trying to grind.
Beau: I want to say what's up to Max Ward, Sven and Sandro at RSR, and Josh at Psycho Wolf for helping us with our first records. I want to say hello to our friends in South East Asia like Tiong, Kid, and Kia of Symphonic Blast. I want to say hello to Masa and Damage Digital/Carcass Grinder, Toshi and Bolt Stein, and Yusuke of World Downfall for helping us out with Japanese grind related matters. Ben Agromosh, Clay Newell, and Billy Razorback for distro matters. Catheter and Brutal Death dudes and of course, all the grinders and thrashers of Houston Texas, you know who are.
Rahi: Daniel Shaw!!!! Art wizard grind demolisher!

MRR: Which brings me to the question about who does your artwork. Who is Daniel Shaw?
Beau: Daniel Shaw is a very close friend of the band. He has believed in us since the beginning of the band and has done all of the art for our records and t-shirts. He has done so much for this band he should practically be a member. What's cool about him is that he is a old school metalhead but has total DIY ethics. I don't know what we would do with out him. I know his artwork has helped us get some attention because it is so good. I mean, the record could totally suck but the art is so good that people will at least give it a chance visually. Anyways, he has a lot going on right now artistically so hopefully he will have time for us. the shit he is doing for next record is the best stuff he has ever done for us. It is an interpretation of the Razor *Violent Restitution* album and it is totally rad.

PETER PAN HITS THE SUBURBS

The Story of The

ASTRONAUTS

Find a supporter of the Astronauts and you've found a fan for life. While the passage of time has sort of painted them as a lesser group or at least under-appreciated, the fact remains that the lack of what is referred to as commercial success is more than made up for by the rabid nature of their supporters.

Mark, founder and vocalist: "I still write songs and I still enjoy performing, due to the unpredictability of any one performance, and the interaction with the audience, many of whom weren't even born when the first EP came out—or even the fourth album. Rewards include the feeling that you're doing something of worth, and that people enjoy it. Financially, the rewards are somewhat less tantalizing."

While far from being a traditional punk band, his initial inspiration was instigated by the happenings of the mid-'70s like most others.

Mark: "Erm, I'd always liked music which retrospectively could be said to have a 'punk attitude' in various musical settings. I then saw the Sex Pistols in a very early form after being party to booking them at a local college. After this, several of my friends started to form bands, and at the time punk rock seemed a diversion from the usual music and it was possible for musical incompetents like me to play gigs."

The DIY ethic that was at least alluded to in the first generation of punk was the gateway to Mark's desires to be involved in making music.

Mark: "I'd always written songs in my head, since I was very young, and the DIY ethic of punk made me feel it was possible to do."

In 1976, the first gestations of what would be the Astronauts began forming.

Mark: "In 1976, in England, there was a very hot summer, and people used to have parties outdoors in woods. We all met up at one of those."

Naturally, all of their initial shows were at home in Hertfordshire.

Mark: "The first three gigs, respectively, were with Johnny Curious and the Strangers, which ended with 50 people being hospitalized due to an invasion of local idiots. The second gig was with Clayson and the Argonauts, who were an unusual combination featuring Alan Clayson, now an author, on vocals. At the somewhat unlikely third gig, we supported Dire Straits, leaving 80% of their audience mystified."

Through some organic chain of events, the Astronauts would eventually meet anarcho hippies Here And Now. For the next couple of years, they would often play together especially in the free festival scene of the time. Much of these free festivals around London were organized by people involved with Fuck Off Records. Founded by Kif-Kif of Here And Now, this put the Astronauts in close proximity both live and on cassette with groups like the Androids of Mu, Alternative TV, Planet Gong, The Mob, and Zounds.

Mark: "We had a few tapes out, on the Fuck Off tape label, which was the brainchild of Kif-Kif from Here And Now, and journalist Jonathan Barnett and some of their friends."

In fact, the group would record for several of these extremely limited cassette releases. They appear on the first release by Fuck Off Records, *Back To Sing For Free* along with Alternative TV, Planet Gong, Wilful Damage, Danny and the Dressmakers, and more. They appear again on the fifth tape release, *Really Weird/Slightly Weirdsville* with Daevid Allen, The Mob, Androids of Mu, and more. On the seventh tape, *Music For Pressure*, they appear along with The Mob, Androids of Mu, Zounds, Here And Now, and loads more. Finally, they appeared on Fuck Off Records' eighth and last release, *Folk In Hell* with The Mob, Mark Perry, Here And Now and more. Fuck Off Records would eventually start releasing vinyl. But that's another story.

While the free festivals and the lyricism of groups like Here And Now were autonomous in nature, the group's only real connection to the anarcho punk scene was via the Mob and Zounds and even for them it involved random chance.

Mark: "Although not as directly involved as other bands, we'd felt a distinct empathy with the anarcho scene, and mainly gigged on that circuit. We'd previously been involved in a tour set up by Here And Now where every gig was free to get in, and some of the bands we toured with on that circuit were the Mob and Zounds, before they signed to Crass."

In 1979, the Astronauts got their first chance to record with the help of *The Weekly Bugle* fanzine.

Mark: "In the late '70s, everybody started a fanzine. One of the local ones was *The Weekly Bugle*. They had seen us and thought of the idea of forming a record label. We were the chosen band to record."

Their self-titled debut EP for Bugle Records was recorded quickly and cheaply.

Mark: "When we recorded the first 7", we were very naive about the whole process—I still am, incidentally—so we followed Alan Clayson's direction and did the best we could. Even as we recorded it, I was aware it was going to be difficult to pigeonhole, but I looked on that as a strength rather than a weakness. Initially the single sold slowly, and mainly in our local area, but after a couple of plays on the John Peel Show, it sold out within a day."

The four songs are quirky, noisy and strangely catchy. Starting off with "All Night Party," there is almost an under-produced element of an early single from the Fall. It's immediately juxtaposed with the pretty acoustic musing of "Back Soon," bringing to mind the Wedding Present. Even the bleak Diane Arbus-like cover art was different from anything else at the time.

At the same time, an odd record came out under the name Restricted Hours. For all intents and purposes, it was the Astronauts under a pseudonym.

Mark: "It was a very limited release, and we sold all copies between us and The Syndicate, who are on the reverse. This raised money for Stevenage Rock Against Racism, who had asked us to record it for them. The label was part of a large network of anti-racist organizations, as the National Front were becoming worryingly visible at the time."

The band came back at the start of the '80s with a new EP titled *Pranksters In Revolt*. The four-song EP was a big production improvement over the first record as well as more complex songwriting. In particular, "Young Man's World" starts like Eno down to the synth parts.

Mark: "Looking back over the recordings, I still like *Pranksters*. Some parts, eg. "Big Ben" are definitely 'of the time,' but I felt it was significantly different to the first EP, which was important."

"Big Ben" is forgivably Ultravox-ish. But the low tech recording, good as it is, still helps make this recording just distorted and muddled enough as not to totally give itself to pretension. This is especially true when you take into account that it is preceded by "We Were Talking," a powerful post-punk number that can stand up against the best of Wire or early Pere Ubu.

With the amount of touring the band had done over the previous years, the record sold surprisingly well with the first pressing gone within weeks. Despite that success, Bugle Records weren't in the position to finance a full-length LP. Once again, their friendship with Fuck Off Records paid off with co-founder Jonathan Barnett coming in to help.

Mark: "Genius was a label started by ex-*NME* journalist Jonathan Barnett, and friend of Gong and ATV. He saw us on one of the Here And Now tours, where we were supporting. We got to know each other, discovered a shared love of Van der Graaf Generator, and he suggested to Bugle to do a joint release, as neither of them had sufficient funding to do it alone."

1981's *Peter Pan Hits The Suburbs* was quite a departure for the band. Leaving behind the more aggro anarcho rants of the previous releases, the ten-song LP is lush full of ballads and with folk implications possibly leaning towards British groups like Fairport Convention; all this with an indescribably raw energy that attracted so many punks to the band.

Mark: "To be honest, the phrase 'Peter Pan' just came into my head. There may be some Freudian explanation; it just sounded like a good title. I suppose there was an element of mischief about it."

The record was co-produced by the band and Grant Showbiz, who is mostly known for his work with Billy Bragg, The Smiths, and The Fall. With the band expanding to a seven-piece for the record, there are also a few guest musicians, including Nik Turner from Hawkwind on sax.

Mark: "It was interesting as we were working with Grant Showbiz and Jonathan Barnett, which in itself ensured an atmosphere of creative chaos. Many ideas were formed in the studio. I still like the album—I think it has a sort of simplicity that I could never reproduce, having learned too much.

"At the time, it was not particularly well received because it was blatantly out-of-kilter with a lot of the music happening at the time, including punk music. Now I think that's one of its strengths, in that it doesn't sound rooted in any particular era. People still come to it for the first time and say they find it really refreshing."

Though successful, a release of that magnitude spelled the end for both Bugle and Genius. The band found themselves without a label and without any interest. But by 1982 they were still interested in recording a follow-up LP. With no hope of vinyl at the time, they went back to what they knew and recorded a cassette full-length. Titled *Only Fools And Optimists*, the fantastically catchy though roughly recorded twelve songs would have been a perfect follow-up to *Peter Pan*. Instead, it was released in limited number as cassette only on Anarres Tapes.

Mark: "Anarres was a tape/video company run by Steve and Laurence from Zounds, who we knew through playing many gigs with them. At this time, Bugle and Genius had split, and nobody wanted to release another record. We'd already recorded six tracks in a studio, with a view to releasing them on vinyl, but had decided this probably wasn't going to happen, so we recorded six more in various houses and bedrooms, and remixed a few bits and pieces, and that became *Only Fools*."

Luckily, before the group could think about recording another tape, the Mob was beginning to have some success with their label, All The Madmen. With a few singles and the impending success of the *Let The Tribe Increase* LP, they were in a position to start working with other bands. This, of course, lead to the Astronauts' recording *It's All Done By Mirrors* for them.

Mark: "We first met The Mob when we were both supporting Here And Now in London. We then did two free tours with the Mob and Zounds. Although overtly more 'punk' than us, The Mob, and particularly Joseph, had a liking for folk music as well as punk, and offered to release the record on their own label, All the Madmen."

The eleven-song full-length has many of the folk elements of the debut record but with more Spartan production. Much of it is almost singer-songwriter-like as on songs like "Typically English Day."

With possibly their most representative record out, the band continued to play live wherever and whenever. Touring with Zounds and now releasing a record on All The Madmen, the group were forever linked to the anarcho punk world.

Mark: "There were lots of different bands we played with, such as Blyth Power, Inner City Unit, Zounds, Cardiacs, Redskins…

"The gigs were, on the whole, good to do. By this time, the audiences seemed slightly more perceptive than when we first started off and there was a generally more congenial atmosphere at the gigs; peaceful anarchy rather than the drunken lunacy of some of the early gigs and I felt less pressure to have to look and dress in a certain way—not that I ever did anyway."

It would be another three years before the group would record again. Even then, 1986 only saw the group able to muster up half an album's worth of material. With five new tracks, the group was obviously anxious to try some new things, as shown by a collaboration with British soprano sax legend Lol Coxhill. (A free improviser, Coxhill was known to have worked with everyone from Mike Oldfield to the Damned.) The remaining four tracks were culled from the group's first two 7"s, two tracks from each. Titled *Soon*, the record did have the feel of a stop gap solution before the band's next move.

That next record would come out the following year. *The Seedy Side Of...* was another new direction. The five-song LP had some of the group's most interesting songwriting. It was also probably the angriest record they had done.

From the liner notes: "As with Fiona the names have been changed to protect the ignorant. Never trust a man in a white suit."

Mark: "The time on the label is much like the time on any label, in that it's just a label releasing a record. Of the three All The Madmen albums, I think *It's All Done By Mirrors* is indubitably the best. I'm less happy with *Soon* and *Seedy Side*, which had their moments, but not really enough of them. I think if I re-recorded the songs I still like from those albums, I could do a much better job now.

"Also, ATM had completely changed, and was being run on a more business-like basis, having been taken over. In some ways the band that recorded those albums didn't always gel musically."

One of the group's most ardent supporters all the while was Robin Basak of *Zero* fanzine. Somewhere along the line he started Acid Stings Records, releasing an LP for the Apostles in 1986. With the Astronauts label-less again, it made sense that they work together.

The result was the Astronauts' most cohesive record in years. With songs that stretched back to the first Fuck Off tape—a very different version of "Secret File" appears on *Back To Sing For Free*—the ten-track LP *In Defense Of Compassion* was a perfect end to the decade.

Mark: "Acid Stings was formed by Robin Basak. Robin ran a fanzine when he was at school, and always came to our gigs. It was many years later that he decided to form a record label. It was essentially a very small, but dedicated label, without the distribution they deserved, which made it much harder for people to hear what we were doing—which is a pity, as I think *In Defense* was one of our strongest albums, lyrically and conceptually."

Acid Stings simultaneously re-released the first two LPs as one cassette. The Astronauts would continue with Acid Stings releasing the *Constitution* 7" in the '90s until the label came to an end at the close of that decade.

Of the dozen or so line-ups over the years, Mark couldn't possibly be expected to know what became of all the former Astronauts.

Mark: "I've no idea where many are. The original bass player died in the '80s, and I haven't heard from the original guitarist since he left, though we still both live in the same town. Of later members, Woody of the *You're All Weird* era went on to play in Clearlake, Phil of the *Upfront & Sideways* era joined RDF and later Pain. Phil from the *Mirrors* era now makes new-age music with many synthesizers. I still see Bob Green and Alan Cowley, who play locally. Other people, I see here and there, but not many are so actively involved in music anymore."

With that, Mark is still very excited about where the band is and what is happening.

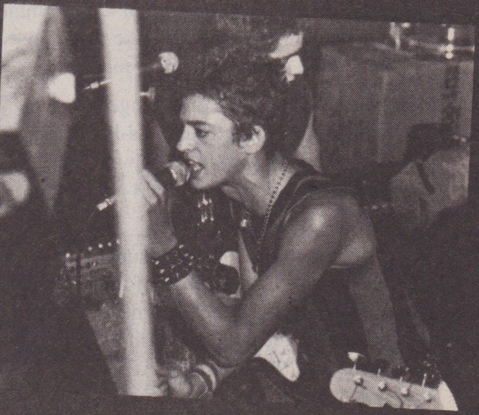
Mark: "All the albums apart from *You're All Weird*, including [the previously solely available on tape] *Upfront & Sideways* should be released late '05 or early '06 on both vinyl and CD by our Greek record label. We are awaiting completion of this, but hopefully it will happen—one never knows these days!—plus, there is a live Astronauts CD due to be released on local label Live Circuit at some point. This will also include a set by a short-lived reformation of Restricted Hours playing selected early material, including the EP *Restricted Hours*. On this occasion it was Alan Cowley and Bob Green, who used to be in Johnny Curious and the Strangers, a band which led me to form my own. There is also a performance by The Otters, a band I formed in 2002, who generally weren't born 'til the late 80s. We perform some old songs, and also new material. This band is generally more aggressive and lively, and, I've been told, scarier than anything I've done before. The Astronauts also have a three-track EP ready for release, when and if someone chooses to release it. Failing that, it will appear as bonus tracks on the live album."

With Mark still playing live in any number of incarnations, it's fascinating to know that the Astronauts have largely been unaffected by the changes in music for the past two decades. They're still playing what they want when they want.

Mark: "I think there was a certain naivety in some aspects of the anarcho scene. But there's nothing wrong with a bit of naivety. It's often better than professional ennui. Also, one didn't feel tied to any particular company or business and was free to do their own thing. I think it provided an important voice for the underground and counter-cultural bands and audiences. Some of the elements of anarcho punk are still detectable in some of the new bands starting up. Additionally, the anarcho punk scene had a vision, which went beyond a bit of pogoing, a few beers, and back to the squat."

FAMILIA REAL

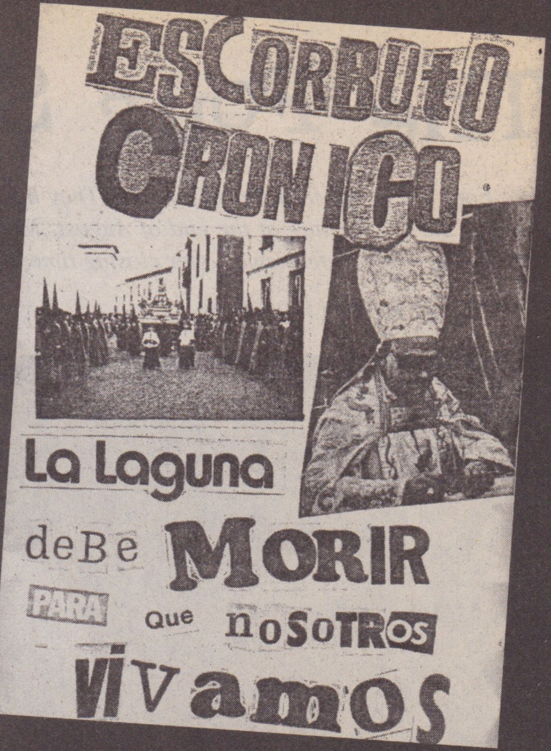
PUNK ROCK FROM THE



all photos by

Jesus Lopez

ESCORBUTO CRÓNICO


ESCORBUTO
CRONICO
La Laguna
deBe MORIR
PARA que nosotros
VIVamos

Escorbuto Crónico (above) and Familia Real (all other photos) were two of the most well-known bands from the Canary Islands' punk scene of the early '80s. Both groups only released singles before breaking up.

CANARY ISLANDS

c. 1982

The Four Slicks

The Four Slicks are from Paris, France. They have put out three mono 45s, and more are on the way. They will be touring the US starting at the end of August. Members are Charlie (vocals), Jon (guitar), Mark (drums), and Ben (bass). They were interviewed after closing time at the Planet Mars, their local bar.

Interview by Laurent Bigophone.

Hugh Proffitt

MRR: What's punk rock like in Paris?

Jon: It's a grand cosmopolitan city, but for punk it compares to Fort Smith, Arkansas, or something.

Ben: No place to play. We have to beg every show from venues which know that a techno dance night will attract more people and make them more money for less effort.

Mark: And noise laws that are completely biased against the bars and clubs.

Ben: At least in France people don't give a shit about a drinking age. I can't believe when I went on vacation to the US I was carded to get into a show.

MRR: What is this rockabilly thing?

Mark: It's just wild rock 'n' roll. The Cramps were the first punks to dig into rockabilly—they ripped off Link Wray, Hasil Adkins, and a million other insane hillbillies. When we try to explain what we sound like and we say the Devil Dogs, Lazy Cowgirls or Fireworks, it's not exactly that, but it's all rock 'n' roll.

Charlie: Our influence isn't rockabilly like Bill Haley and the Comets, it's a mutant kind that you can call "wild rockabilly" or something. French people call it "white rock" to compare it to "black rock," the wild black R&B of the '50s like Little Richard. There's tons of it on Norton, like the Kicksville and Raging Teens series.

Ben: Also the Rampage, Sin Alley and Desperate Rock 'n' Roll compilations.

Mark: It's the Pebbles of rockabilly—all these unknown groups of hicks, drunk and on amphetamines, who put out one incredible 45, five hundred copies or less.

Charlie: There's good stuff on the Nasty Rockabilly series too.

Mark: But you bought to whack off on the cover art, admit it.

Jon: I write our lyrics when I'm good and drunk. The feeling and the vocabulary are from "white rock" songs, but I add a nasty aspect that had to remain implicit in the '50s.

MRR: How did the Rip Offs reunion go?

(general hilarity)

Mark: We did the so-called Rip Offs reunion in Paris just for fun when the Zodiac Killers were on tour; it was a fun show but the organizational disaster of the century. I played drums, and Nicus [from the Anteenagers] played the Shane guitar parts. All we could get was a shitty boat to play on, and the boat arrived three hours late at the dock. By the time we got the equipment set up half the audience had given up and left. We went on anyway and had a great time.

Jon: It used to drive me crazy when people put "ex-Rip Offs" on the posters when the Four Slicks played. Now I realize that people like to have a reference. But it can only go so far. For me, the best record I've bought this year is the Flakes album. People automatically say "oh yeah, Russell, ex-Mummies." Fine, but that's a record which doesn't need to make any excuses, it's already great. And if it were a shitty record, it doesn't matter if every member of the Mummies is on it.

MRR: And the Four Slicks?

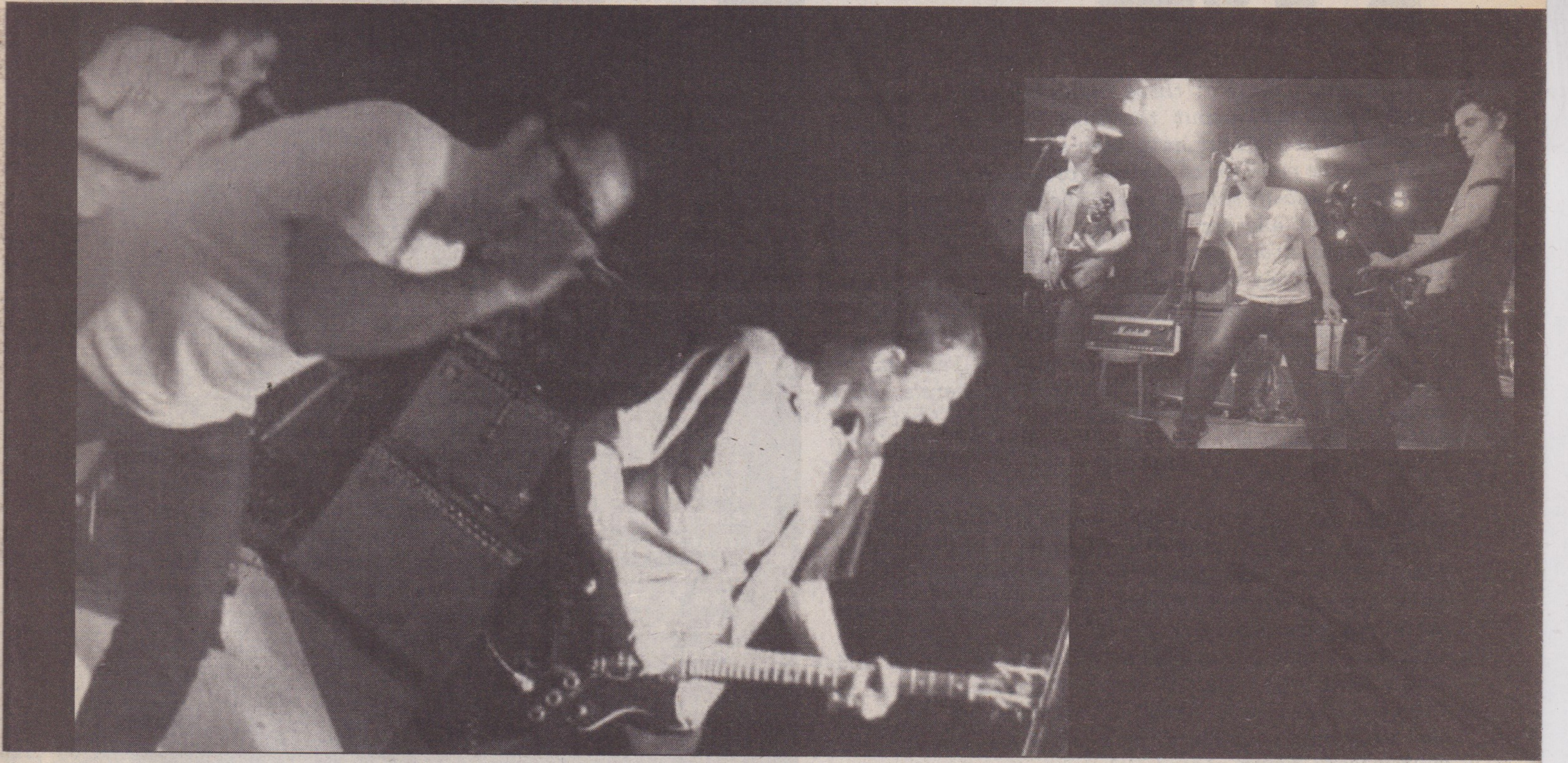
Jon: It's not the Rip Offs, or the No Talents [Mark's old band]. Just the same, toward the end of the Rip Offs I wrote a song called

"She's a Jailbird" which was basically a Four Slicks style song, but now I can't remember how it goes.

Ben: I'm glad you forgot it; we do enough covers.

Jon: The point is that, as Greg Lowery would say, rock 'n' roll is simple. It's all the same three chords.

MRR: Since you brought it up, Greg Lowery.



Jon: He's a guy with a great sense of rock 'n' roll who has done a lot of great shit. But, along with pretty much everybody who knows him well, I will verify that he can be difficult to get along with. It was unnecessary for him to constantly talk shit about me after the band broke up, although he recently apologized. And he still owes me my cut of the record profits and two Zodiac Killers t-shirts. But it doesn't weigh on my mind, I've got plenty of t-shirts.

MRR: What about being an old fart in a punk band?

Ben: Back to you, Jon.

Jon: Let's admit that rock 'n' roll is teenage music. It's funny to watch everybody from my era get old, have kids, and slowly edge out of punk life. It's normal; people recognize their limit, and one day it'll happen to me. I've resisted a long time because I'm having too much fun.

Mark: Remember the time Charlie's back went out in Amsterdam and we had to get him wasted so he could walk to the show?

Ben: I felt like I was touring with Elvis and Jerry Lee Lewis [meaning Charlie and Jon; Ben is 24].

Mark: But there's no age difference as far as alcohol abuse. That's something that brings this band together. At the party after the show we're usually the last ones standing, and still drinking.

Charlie: I drink as much as Ben; the difference is I don't throw up after. That's called maturity.

MRR: What do you dream of doing or seeing in the USA?

Charlie: I'd love to see a hot rod race on the Bonneville salt flats.

Jon: A good American striptease bar, like we don't have in France.

Mark: Same as you guys, plus buying lots of American junk: records, clothing, car parts…

Ben: Corn-fed American chicks.

MRR: Second part of the question, what do you definitely not want to see in America?

Charlie: A reggae concert.

Jon: The inside of a McDonald's restaurant.

Mark: Typical narrow-minded ignorant Bush-loving Americans.

Ben: The same corn-fed chicks the next morning.

MRR: What's happening these days in Paris?

Ben: For bands, there are all our friends: the Anteenagers, Terribles, Operation S, Frustration, Real Gone Daddies, Volt, Cavaliers…

Mark: And for cars, there are the Loud Mufflers, a car club that has organized meetings every summer, although this year we're taking a break. Last year the Phantom Surfers and Hi-Winders played, it was great. Check out the site, loudmufflers.com.

MRR: What do cars have to do with the Four Slicks?

Charlie: It's like rock 'n' roll. It's fun to step on the gas, make noise, chicks like it…

Mark: No need to explain how it all goes together—kustom cars and hot rods, rock 'n' roll, drinking, drugs, sex, B movies…it's what makes America worthwhile.

Jon: We've toured in Europe with Charlie's [1959 Simca] Ariane and [1956] Dodge, but I just got a '63 Ford Falcon wagon that I am fixing up, that's gonna make touring easier. The motor was changed for a 289; it'll beat the Dodge.

Charlie: I don't think so, sonny boy.

MRR: Do you believe that driving and alcohol don't mix?

Charlie: We got our friend Fred to be roadie. His doctor had prohibited him from drinking another drop because he had damaged his liver so much. But now he's drinking again.

Mark: Attention California Highway Patrol!

Ben: If we get stopped we'll just pretend we don't speak English.

www.fourslicks.com

THE★FALLOUT

With a grand total of three members (Bob, Jeremy and Lord Byron) and about the same number of chords, Toronto's The Fallout have been slogging it out, DIY-style, in the punk rock trenches for almost a decade now. As they say about themselves in the song "In This Land," they're "just another punk rock band" that's written "some songs, about protecting right and correcting all the wrongs." They've got a new long-player, What Is Past Is Prologue, *out now on Longshot Music and, like their previous releases, it's chock full of up-tempo and up-yours sing-a-long political punk rock. The Fallout is a band with a message and a mission. Here's what singer/guitarist Lord Byron had to say when I sat down with him recently. Interview by Randy Smith. Photos by Robert Scott.*

MRR: The Fallout is frequently compared, musically and lyrically, to bands like The Clash, The Jam and Stiff Little Fingers—and I'd add Moral Crux to the mix as well. Are you comfortable with these comparisons, and would you agree with them?

Definitely! And I'd add Canadian bands like DOA and Youth Youth Youth also. We're happy to draw attention to the bands that have influenced us over the years. We certainly have some Moral Crux pop tendencies too. You can't escape being pigeon-holed, so I'm not going to argue the point. We're not some posing artists trying to impress, with faux-musicianship, with a pile of stompboxes, claiming to be creating something completely original. We play high energy rock and roll just like the bands we keep getting compared to. We're just carrying the torch forward.

MRR: The Fallout bills itself, quite simply, as a Toronto Punk Rock Band. I know that some of you have been playing the punk rock for well on twenty years now. What's it mean to you to be a punk rock band in this day and age?

I've personally played in various punk and garage bands since the 1980s. In the late '80s it was harder to be in a punk band. The scene was much smaller. There were fewer bands and even fewer clubs to play at. After the original punk explosion in the late '70s there was definitely a period when it was very out of fashion to be into punk. For better or worse, bands like Nirvana and Green Day brought punk into the mainstream and into the shopping malls in the 1990s. Today it's easier to get shows and sell CDs. I'm not saying the early years of punk were better, just different. Certainly the very early scenes were much more open, perhaps as a matter of survival, to different genres. Bands today often fall into neatly defined categories that can seem as conservative as the music that punk broke out of in the first place.

MRR: What bands, past or present, would best exemplify, musically and lyrically, what The Fallout is all about? Are there any bands out there right now that really inspire you?

Two albums that have always been a big influence are Stiff Little Finger's *Inflammable Material*, and DOA's *Something Better Change*. They really drove home the idea about thinking for yourself and doing it yourself. You could write songs about more than just fast cars and girls. You could write about what affects your life like Jake Burns or make a statement about what is important in your community like Joe Keithley. I think, or hope anyways, that we continue to get this out in our music. Local bands that we've played with and feel in tune with are The Class Assassins and Angels Saints and Heroes—two great Canadian bands that deserve more attention.

MRR: You clearly put a lot into this band—time, effort, energy, money, et cetera. But what do you get out of it? What keeps you guys doing this night after night? I'm asking because in your song "The Great Disappointment" you seem to be saying that being in a band can take, or has taken, a real toll, in that parents, friends, teachers, et cetera, have all been less than thrilled with your "career" choice.

"The Great Disappointment" is about having to deal with people in your life that don't understand the passion you have for being in a punk band. I mean, I wish I understood it myself! It doesn't make much sense either, but I have to keep doing it. It's about dealing with people who think that being in a band is a "phase" you're going through. From my perspective, school and work are "phases" I'm going through while being in a band.

After many years with no apparent commercial success, people in your life expect that you will give up your burning musical ambitions and move on to something more "productive." They just don't get it and I'm tired of always having to explain myself. You see, everyone who is critical thinks they mean well. But really, they've given up on their dreams; they've lost their passion. They can't deal with anyone who hasn't lost their youthful idealism. So it's our little love song for the nay-sayers throughout our lives.

MRR: Why the steadfast insistence on DIY, and, as *MRR* asked some labels/bands in a previous issue, what does DIY mean to you?

DIY is not waiting for the right time, place or circumstances to come along and take care of you. DIY is making your ambitions happen right here, right now. We have no illusions about major label contracts. We don't want to make compromises on what we write and produce. In this day and age there is no reason you can't build your own following with the resources available to anyone. Labels like Dischord are great examples of how DIY continues to be a viable option. We're very happy with our relationship with

Mike at Longshot Music to get our music on our terms. Hopefully we can inspire others to find ways to get their music out there without compromise.

MRR: Yeah, your last couple of releases have been put out by Longshot Music but you've also released stuff on your own record label, Red Menace. Do you plan on continuing to release stuff on Red Menace, your own music or anybody else's?

For this year we are quite busy releasing a new CD right on the heels of the last one. We've begun to work on the new full-length too. We have a new video and hope to do another one this year. So we aren't able to focus on Red Menace or other projects at the moment. We are trying to expand our recording studio so that we can bring in other bands. We would love to partner with other bands/labels that want to work towards promoting the wealth of great bands in Southern Ontario. So if any like-minded folks are listening

MRR: In the song "Talkin' Punk Rock Civil War" you seem to be taking punks and punk rock to task—you sing "No I don't think you understand what we're fighting for / Our music, poetry and politics don't lead to a cure / We need more than talkin' punk rock civil war." What's this all about then?

A lot of punk is about making changes: songs about political action and anarchy. But getting wasted at the Warped Tour isn't going to bring about the revolution anytime soon. Chant along working class hymns don't create change. At most we're bringing awareness to social issues. So this song is hopefully encouraging folks to get out there, get involved in their communities and start making the kinds of changes punk rockers are always singing about. Real changes are being made by real people everyday at union halls, the United Way, Canadian Blood Services, and the Daily Bread Food Bank. The jocks who think it's cool to slam the hardest on the dance floor just don't get it, that's not revolution.

The song is written in talkin' blues style like the old folk singers because Bob Dylan, the icon of all protest singers, is just as guilty of a lot of talk but little action—and The Fallout are no different either. We're busy making music, booking shows and recording while trying not to go broke. We've played a lot of benefit shows, we've attended various protests, but have we affected any real change? It's not about being cynical, but being honest about what it really means to be a punk.

MRR: So, as a band you're trying to shine some light on social issues that you find important. Are there any issues in particular that The Fallout is passionate about or that you try and highlight? Either in your music or you lives in general?

We're definitely a band trying to bring awareness of social issues and injustice. We touch on the usual suspects like racism in "Bigots and Bastards" and poverty on "In The Gutter." We express frustration towards apathy in "War Without End" and "Heart Of The City." We are vegetarians and are trying to create awareness of animal advocacy. New songs like "Meat Market" express the cruelty of factory farming. We aren't saying that you should feel guilty just because you eat meat. We want people to know that the market pressures to have low price animal products produces a lot of suffering. I think most non-vegetarians would agree that a cow is an animal, just like their dog or cat. It seems rational to protect a cow from suffering, by eliminating factory farming practices, just as we protect dogs and cats from cruelty.

We also try to focus on issues that are Canadian. Songs like "Tin Canners" remind us that he have a history of social errors. New songs like "Leaving Ontario," which focuses on migrant workers, suggest that we still have work to do. As much as we can, we deal with issues that we can actually act on in our communities. International issues are important, but it's just too easy to point out someone else's mistakes while ignoring our own.

MRR: So what does the future hold for The Fallout?

We've got a brand new CD of some old obscure Canadian covers called *The Turning Point* on Longshot Music. A video has just been completed by Aldo of FUTV fame for the song "In The Gutter," and it looks great. We are currently recording new songs for another full-length CD for later this year as well as some tracks for other projects. So we are busy as always. We're trying to work out a tour for this year, but still haven't finalized any dates as yet.

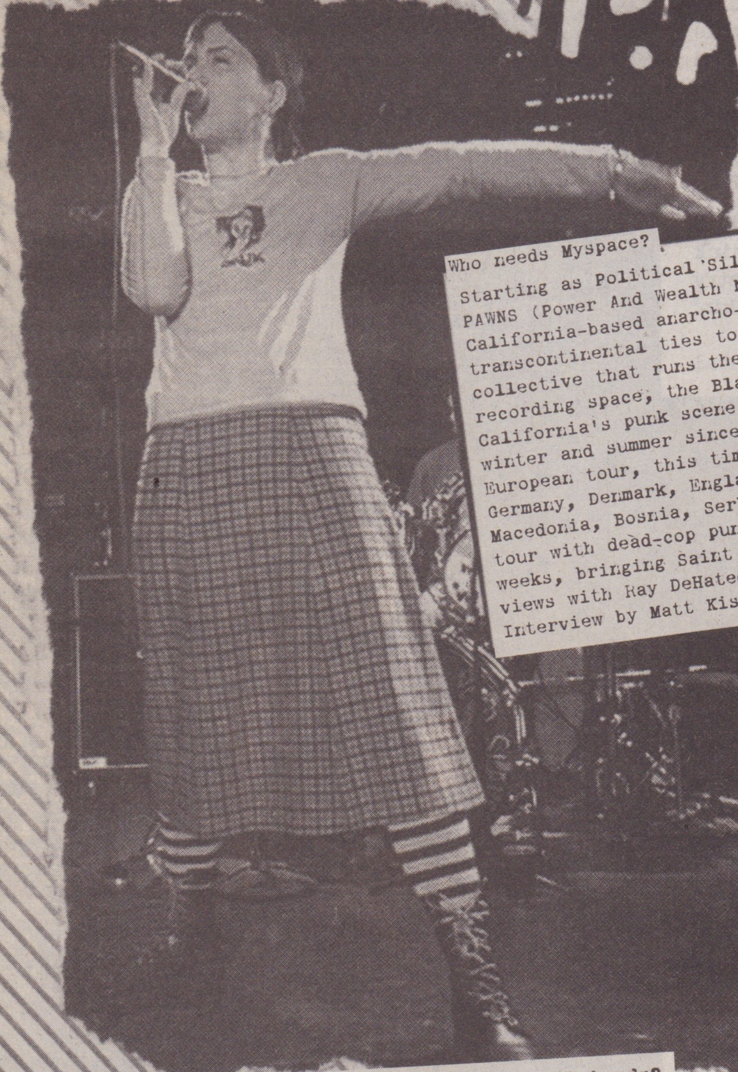
MRR: The CD of Canadian punk covers sounds great. I noticed that you're covering some better known bands (Youth Youth Youth and The Viletones) as well as some I'm personally not familiar with (The Allies, The Red Squares). Any particular reason for picking the bands that you did?

I'd really like to say it was well thought out, but truth is it pretty much was arbitrary choices based on what can be found in my somewhat limited collection of Canadian singles and tapes. It struck me how many great Canadian bands are now all but forgotten. If a CD reissue doesn't exist then it's very hard for new, younger punk fans to become aware of their roots. The Young Lions were probably one of the best and very little good quality recording exists. Their one vinyl record *Welcome To The Freak Show* doesn't show them in their prime. These guys were every bit as good as The Clash, with definitely a lot more edge and energy. Youth Youth Youth were the cornerstone of the early hardcore scene in Toronto. They had their own fanzine and were politically active.

But the early scene was also much more diverse. Any independent record was suspect back then, it just wasn't as common as today. The Red Squares were more of a quirky, arty band, but a song like "Transmitter" had a lot of energy. The notorious Viletones were very much a basic rock and roll band. So we tried to reflect the broader, independent music styles.

www.thefallout.ca
www.myspace.com/thefalloutcanada

P.A.W.N.S.



Who needs Myspace?

Starting as Political Silence in the early '90s and morphing into the PAWNS (Power And Wealth Need Slaves) a few years later, this Chico, California-based anarcho-punk band has played the world and established transcontinental ties to their European counterparts. They're part of a collective that runs their own record label, Manifest Destiny, and recording space, the Black Lodge, and have been part of Northern California's punk scene for more than ten years. Touring nearly every winter and summer since 1996, the PAWNS are about to embark on another European tour, this time traveling through places like Holland, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, England, Croatia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey, Macedonia, Bosnia, Serbia, the Czech Republic, and Austria. They'll be on tour with dead-cop punk rockers MDC and the Vals for more than twelve weeks, bringing Saint Ann's politically-minded lyrics and astute societal views with Ray DeHated's percussive power chords.

Interview by Matt Kiser. All pictures by Martijn Zuidweg

MRR: Has technology made touring easier for punk bands?

Saint Ann: A lot easier.

Ray DeHated: We still do it the old way of pulling out the atlas and plotting it out.

Saint Ann: Usually, while we're on the road going, "Did we miss the exit?"

Ray DeHated: The first tour we booked, we ended up with a $300 phone bill, and that was just a two-week trip to Vancouver and back.

Saint Ann: It was all by phone trying to book European tours before the web. I can't even imagine.

Ray DeHated: Technology has really helped us in the maturation of our characters and personalities since we're always interested in the international tribal aspect of the punk community. So, to be able to garner details about what's going on in people's lives, how their squat's operating, the level of resistance they're at, the positive things in their life in terms of their artistic endeavors-that's really the fuel that keeps us going when we're on tour. That's cool because our scene takes care of itself pretty well; it wasn't always like that, but it's maturated here at home. I think that our mission, as far as why we tour, is to be able to help express the same sentiments we all carry in different locations. So, technology really motivates you even though you're physically separated by thousands and thousands of miles.

MRR: What about Myspace?

Ray DeHated: Get rid of Myspace-have the same thing, but not owned by Rupert Murdoch. Develop some hacking programs and viruses that flood that fucking bastard's money machine. Get rid of the advertising on the crappy piece of shit that we have a site on as well. It's cool all the way up until you figure out who's getting the money. Of course it's killer, you can do a search, but why haven't we done it ourselves? I can't be too critical, I barely know how to operate a word processor.

MRR: Technology was supposed to be the great savior of our society, what went wrong?

Saint Ann: Access or lack of access. There's a drop-off as far as access goes. You get to a certain point where the lower and the lower-middle classes don't have access.

Ray DeHated: You don't make money off of poor people typing on a computer-you make money off of poor people by exploiting their labor. I think that's obvious. I think it's an issue of-you're provided with certain benefits in this society, as long as rich people get their cut. Anything that you can make money at is illegal unless a rich person can get their cut. OK, sure, maybe counterculture musicians are benefiting from Myspace, yes, but we are paying for it. We're paying for it by the inundation of advertisement. That's the cost.

THE PEOPLE BREAKS
POLITICAL
APATHY

I don't think it's devaluing music, honestly, but I think it's a way to make profit off of DIY music. They don't want to carry the burden of releasing these albums for all these bands, so they developed a new way. They bought access to all these independent artists, so they don't have to release the albums. Now they make money off the advertisers who try to reach those people. It's a big fucking scam, but on the flipside, not to sound too hypocritical, we have a Myspace account as well. Do I like it? Well, I don't like who gets the money out of it, I'll tell you that.

Saint Ann: It's also a matter in which you use technology, too. How many of us in the international tribe of punk subculture have Myspace accounts and actually are inundated by the advertisements on it? How many of *us* pay attention to that?

Ray DeHated: It's kind of like this: try to *not* read a billboard sign. The next thing you know, you can speed read because advertising has taught you to speed read since the day you were born.

Saint Ann: Yeah, but it doesn't mean you're speed reading an advertisement on a Web site for Target and then you're going to drop $1,000 on a credit card there.

Ray DeHated: Sure, I'm not going to buy into advertising on a Web site, but I don't want to be exposed to it either. It purchases your willingness to use Myspace by tolerating something.

Saint Ann: I guess what we're getting to is, if Myspace wasn't owned by somebody like Rupert Murdoch and was instead more of a non-profit organization that collectively created a forum for bands and like-minded people to connect with each other, they could use the advertising space to reflect what the website would be serving. You could have advertising for underground record labels or bands or venues. That money would circulate within that community.

Ray DeHated: Another aspect of technology though, is that equipment is becoming more affordable to people. On a limited level, technology has helped bands sound better as far as what they have access to. I remember when you had to buy a PA, you could never afford one. Nowadays, you can basically afford one if you have a minimum wage job, if you're driven to do that with you life. In that sense, technology has been really cool.

MRR: How does punk and DIY culture help address societal ills?

Ray DeHated: What it teaches us, ultimately, is that all the guides in terms of right and wrong in terms of values and morality is a bunch of bullshit. Everything that's prescribed to you as being the source of morality has turned out to be just the opposite. It causes us to evaluate our own value system and it also forces us to be tolerant of other people's value systems. I know everything I was taught turned out to be a lie that benefited some rich motherfucker. Punk forces you to take responsibility for yourself in the sense that you need to carve out a value system because it won't be handed to you anymore. You've seen the abuses in society. Why would you cling to what's poisoned us all?

MRR: OK, but how does punk and anarchism fix these problems?

Saint Ann: The problem with anarchy is that we are still a part of the bigger picture. There are certain things that we can't supply ourselves. The classic example is a band going on tour. What do they go on tour in? They go on tour in a van. What does the van need? The van needs fuel. Then you're right back-you can't escape it. Unless you were like a hermit on a commune-a commune of hermits up in the hills somewhere growing their own food and making their own clothes-you can never be totally free from it. Or, maybe we've just nurtured ourselves to believe that we can't go without the things that used to be luxury but are now considered necessity. Maybe none of us have tried-*really* tried.

Ray DeHated: When we look at the anarchist communities that exist today, we suspect that a lot of people's definition of an anarchist lifestyle is really a consequence of rejecting something else. The more you can free yourself from the aspect of "I hate this, I hate that," and move towards "I'm going to define myself according to new principles," that's the cusp of enlightenment. At what point do we shift from recognizing what we all

agree to abhor to what we want to generate for ourselves? That's an issue of character maturation and it's rare to see it in practice.

MRR: If we're all striving to be better people and we're using DIY as the vehicle, at what point do we sacrifice values to exist in a near-utopian society?

Saint Ann: I think I have a problem with the blanket definition of DIY, because a lot of people act like it's a code of ethics that everyone should know and everyone should adhere to and there is no room for toleration. It's as if you do things one way because they've been defined as do-it-yourself, and if you don't, you're not doing-it-yourself. I think of it not in terms of a way to define the message you're using to do what you're doing, but more of a command: do it yourself, you know? It implies action instead of trying to follow somebody else's code of ethics.

You do it yourself with the tools you have available to you and they're not always the same. You have to be a little bit inventive. You need to be open to other people's interpretations and their life experiences and what kind of personal knowledge they've acquired throughout their life. It's best to keep an open mind to be able to pick up on the dialogue. If we're really all trying to go to "perfectibility" and being the best people we can be, then we have to be open to different definitions of something like do-it-yourself."

Ray DeHated: DIY is a misnomer. Do-it-yourself doesn't really match the concept. The concept is do-it-*ourselves*. We find that a lot of do-it-yourself at times can dangerously bleed into, "If I don't get credit for something, then I don't want be affiliated with it." That just gives rise to elitism. It's not DIY, it's DIO. Do-it-ourselves. You can't do anything worth doing on your own.

MRR: Are there different variations of DIY on a regional scale?

Saint Ann: As far as our experiences go, the American model is really far behind the European model. Some people are starting to just get more of the communal aspect of it. Maybe it's also just a matter of a shifting of the definition of what punk is. Was it started in a particular spot and picked up and translated and passed on to all these different areas or was it something that a lot of people realized at the same time? Then it's a question of circulation, whether it was a circulated idea or whether it was something that was happening in a lot of different places. At this point it's becoming connected on a global scale.

Ray DeHated: If you don't fall into the trap of an egomaniac, you can recognize your function as a musician in the counterculture. We're the mechanism that carries the message between.

MRR: Talk a little bit about the accessibility of punk these days. Places like Hot Topic sell the look and you can find hundreds of books and Web sites that talk about punk from '77.

Ray DeHated: Those books are observations of a past event. If you're living your life to fit someone's observation of a past event, you're not crafting your own life. Nowadays a lot of punks are introduced because they can see it on MTV. Well, that's not punk. You read a book about punk, but you're not reading about punk today, you're reading about punk at a certain time. All people go through that phase where their perception widens and they can better recognize that punk isn't about a spiked belt from Hot Topic.

Saint Ann: It's about the adaptability of the basic ideas. A 14-year old reads a book about what was going on in London, England in 1979, and somehow they're in tune with that world. It's not about how to relive it, it's about how to pick up on those ideas and expand upon them and how to adapt that to something that's more long-term.

Ray DeHated: You're picking up on the idea and expanding upon it and how it pertains to your life and the people around you.

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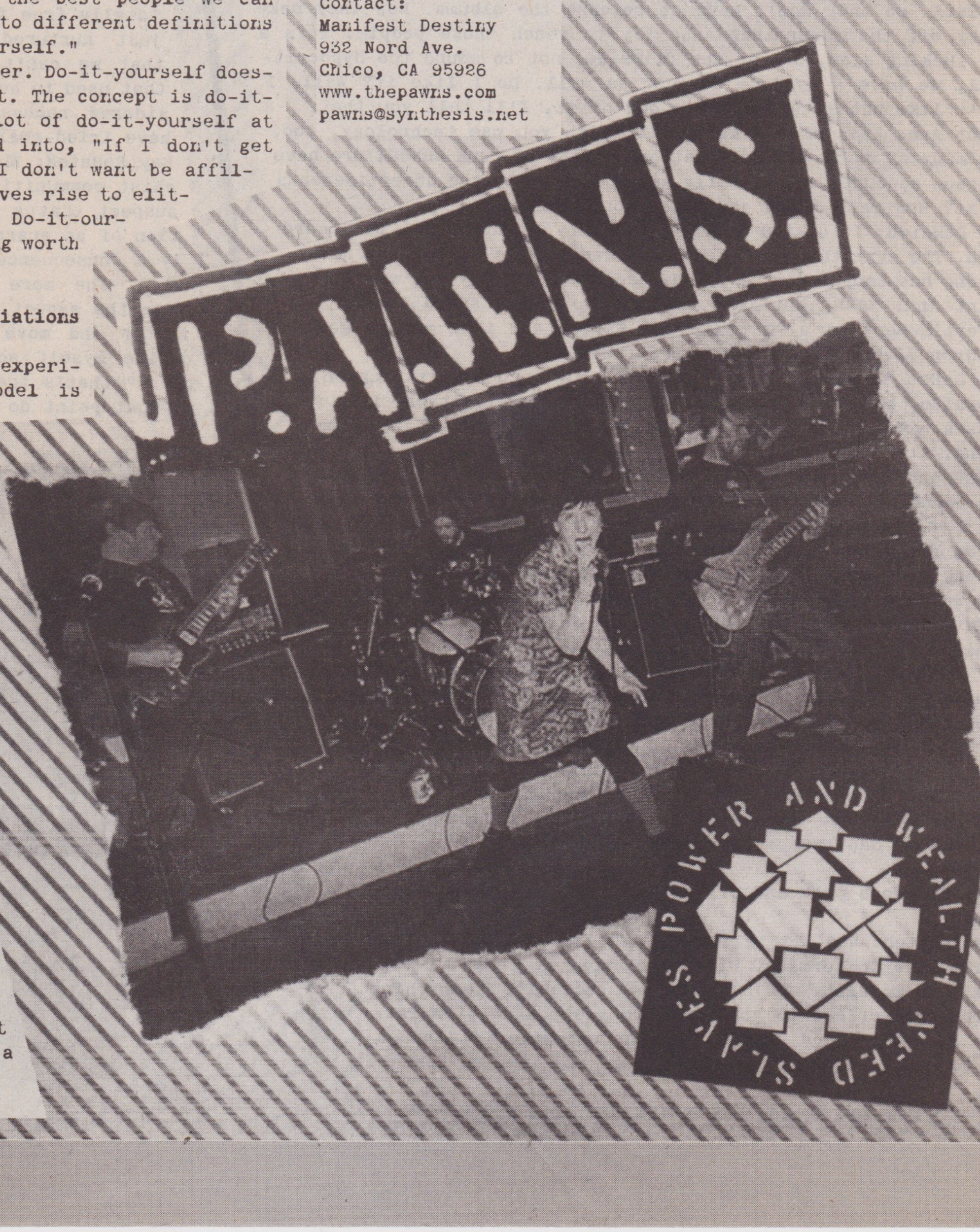
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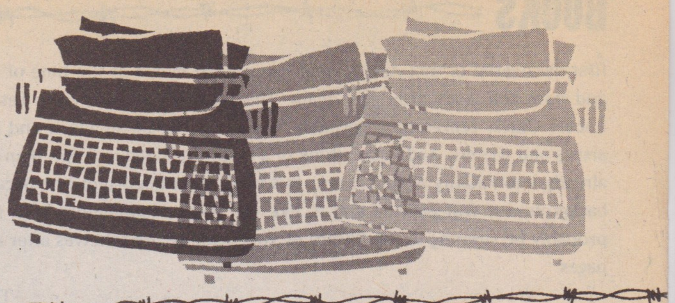

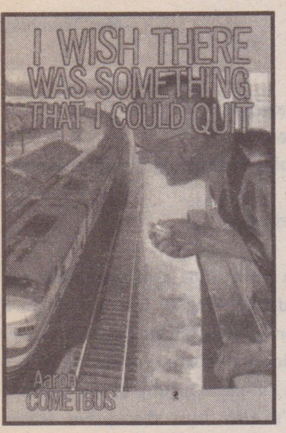
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Aaron Cometbus, a.k.a. Aaron Elliot, has been dazzling lucky readers in the punk underground for more than 20 years, most famously as the editor and main contributor to Cometbus fanzine. Cometbus is a zine that begat a thousand other zines, all over-caffeinated hand-lettered personal zines about hangin' out, going to shows, and going on road trips. Like most archetypes, Cometbus is infinitely better than its imitators.

One of the recent issues of Cometbus was a novella called Double Duce, reprinted in book form by Last Gasp in 2003. Elliot's effortless plot development and vibrant characters finally took center stage after many years of shorter personal essays (which make up most issues of mid-to-late period Cometbus). The friendly, readable tone of his autobiographical sketches was extended to novella length in Double Duce, and rightfully established Elliot as "America's most famous unknown writer" (Philadelphia Independent).

I Wish There Was Something That I Could Quit is Elliot's second novella, clocking in at just over 100 pages. While Double Duce was definitely based on real people, real situations, and a real punk house above a real liquor store, this new novella has no similar obvious basis in reality. That said, the story and characters ooze authenticity, and I bet that at least some of the book is based on real people.

Nowhere as linear as Double Duce, I Wish There Was Something That I Could Quit is a gritty yet entertaining snapshot of low-income life in a tiny town with a train line running through it. Without going too far into plot details, there's a character named Aaron who's very reminiscent of Elliot. That is about the end of similarities with his earlier novella (in which he also appeared. This new one is much more thoughtful and directly applicable to anyone disaffected, stuck in a rut, insecure, and/or unsure about the direction of their life.

Here is one character talking to herself, drinking alone late at night:

> "What happened to me? ...Well, I'll tell you what happened. Nothing, that's what. Still the same. Just that now there's no more reassuring feeling that everything will work out with time and get better. No more faith that if we yell loud enough, someone will listen. No more security even that if we just stay quiet and try to live our little lives, they'll even let us. Not on our own terms, at least. As if these were even close to my own terms. Taking money from the government, that pretty much admits their claim that I'm crazy. And makes everything I have to say worthless, because who's paying my rent? Right. But what am I gonna do, get a job at the donut shop instead? Well, maybe. Let's not rule out anything at this point." [pp 30-1]

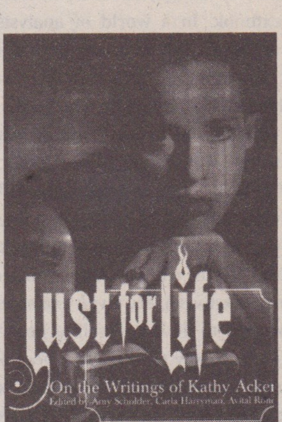
The book is actually a lot more optimistic and upbeat then the quote indicates, but this quote illustrates the universality of the characters. Who hasn't had late night internal conversations about where our lives are going? Or been disturbed by yesterday's bright future being today's dreary reality? Or been caught like a deer in the headlights between the mediocre yet safe present and the risks of great payoffs/awful losses in the future? (While this doesn't come up in the above quote, it is a major theme of the book)

Every reader can identify with these broad ideas. The small injection of punk rock into the narrative reads almost as an afterthought, which I think helps it communicate more directly with more readers. (Although I think Double Duce was easily decipherable by mainstream readers even with its huge amount of punk rock action) I Wish There Was Something That I Could Quit reads like a Cometbus wiped of most of its punk subtext without losing any of the power and strength of the plot, meaning, or literary skills that permeate almost everything Elliot writes.

The shortness of this book leads, almost by definition, to its only real weakness: the lack of extensive character development or character history. For such a brief book, Elliot does a fantastic job of filling in the characters and gives them enough life to make them believable and sympathetic, which is difficult enough to accomplish with a full-length novel. I think the characters could've been a little more filled in over the length of book, but compared to the book's plethora of pluses, this is a minor minus.

At 100 pages, this book is a quick read. It is also a book that demands you reread it at least twice to wring the most meaning out of it. I'm excited to be able to recommend Elliot's latest novella to anyone who like to read, Cometbus fan or not, based on its content, thoughtfulness, and technically stellar writing.

—Jesse Luscious


Lust for Life
On the Writings of Kathy Acker
Edited by Amy Scholder, Carla Harryman, Avital Ronell

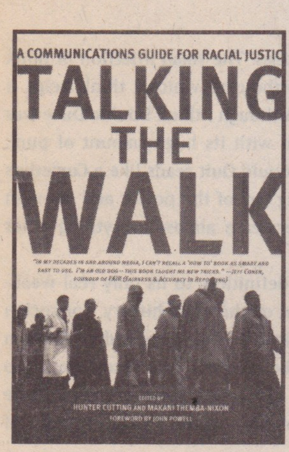
Lust for Life: On the Writing of Kathy Acker
Eds. Amy Scholder, Carla Harryman, Avital Ronell
120 pgs • $19.95
Verso Press
180 Varick St.
New York, NY 10014
www.versobooks.com

To be honest, I have always steered clear of Kathy Acker's writing, fearing that her honorary title as "punk rock writer" meant that she wrote in the Weetzie Bat style, featuring punk fairies and childlike druggies who populate the books of that ilk. So, I was pretty hesitant about accepting this as my first book to review, figuring that I would hate it and have nothing to say about it. It was a pleasant surprise when, having reached page two of the introduction, I was already on my way to the library to take out a couple of her books.

What I particularly liked about the book was that there was a lot of context supplied, from the political climate during which Acker came of age, to the first time one of the essayists heard the X-Ray Spex, it was really easy to place Acker's work in a personal and historical context. I often find that critical writing about writing is terribly dry and boring, and not very fun for a weekend in the park read. But I was happy to find that this book is less academic-style theory, and more sort of a combination of personal and critical writing. Not to say that these essays were facile, or perzine style, but rather that they were as creative and, in a way, groundbreaking as Acker's own writing is. Granted, there was at least one essay that was a little too "meta" for me, but overall I found the essays to be interesting and accessible.

The essays in Lust for Life are pretty great. They provide a lot of history, how Acker became interested in avant-garde / conceptualist writing, how the authors first discovered or met Acker, what her writing meant at the time of authorship and now, ten years after her death. The essayists, ranging from Leslie Dick to Robert Gluck, represent a veritable who's who of postmodern and conceptual artists and writers. And I can't think of a higher recommendation than this: If you already know Kathy Acker's work, this book is an important one because of the background it will provide and if, like me, you are unfamiliar with it, you will probably be running to the library or your friends' bookshelves after a couple of pages.

—Thera Webb


A COMMUNICATIONS GUIDE FOR RACIAL JUSTIC
TALKING THE WALK
EDITED BY
HUNTER CUTTING AND MAKANI THEMBA-NIXON
FOREWORD BY JOHN POWELL

Talking the Walk:
A Communications Guide for Racial Justice
Edited by Hunter Cutting & Makani Themba-Nixon
197 pages $15
AK Press
674A 23rd Street
Oakland, CA 94612

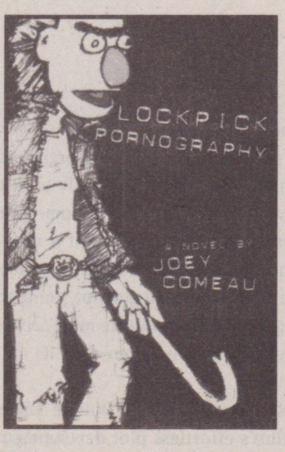
Often in book reviews, even in the pages of the magazine you hold in your very hands, writers raise the (usually completely justified) concern that a particular work of scholarship, while deft in observing and diagnosing a social problem or phenomenon, may come up somewhat short in the solution department. It's not that we readers expect books (or any individual book as the case may be) to right the world's myriad ills; we merely would like to see a greater degree of specificity, engagement, and activity than is often in evidence as we finish reading even the most involving of texts.

Talking the Walk, a new book brought to you by the good and tireless folks at AK Press, gets around these concerns almost entirely by taking on a form not often seen on the radical/leftist literary circuit: a textbook. In a world of analysis, Talking the Walk is emphatically a "how-to," presenting itself as a user's manual for racial justice organizations and anti-racist activists trying to navigate the increasingly dangerous and terrifying world of the mainstream media. The book is divided into three sections: the first digests the problems associated with activist work and outlines the steps necessary to successfully infiltrate the news, the second provides case studies of on-the-ground racial justice media campaigns with analyses of what worked and what didn't, and the third offers the main points broken down and reiterated in bullet form (which never hurts), along with worksheets and questionnaires for practical use. In other words, while reading, you see what must be done in the field of racial justice media activism, are given examples of how it's been done before, and are then prompted to do it yourself (a hearty "Up the punks!" is in order). The book, in a more direct way than many others, is designed to be used, as a resource, a survival guide, or introduction to the world of racial justice activism in the media, and as such provides a welcome alternative to the age-old strategy of "raising questions" in the form of pages that are literally meant to be torn out and written upon.

Underlying these everyday successes and real-world solutions, the work put in by editors Hunter Cutting and Makani Themba-Nixon represents an important shift in the foundational assumptions of media activism. Many theorists have a bad habit of keeping "the media" at arm's length, granting it a univocal totality it does not actually possess and refusing to tangle with it on its own terms. Cutting and Themba-Nixon, on the other hand, make subtle but in many ways radical moves towards a much-needed demystification of the news media as we know it. While consistently mindful of the ways in which leftist messages can be chewed up and distorted by various media outlets, the editors fundamentally accept the news media as a force which must be infiltrated, shaped, and wielded in order for justice to be served, and then actually give readers the tools to do so. Leftists spend an inordinate amount of time diagnosing "spin" as something that the enemy does, that we, in order to maintain the moral high ground, should not stoop to; books like Talking the Walk get closer to the truth: that spin, like it or not, is not just a media strategy but the language of the media itself, and without the ability to put it to work for us, we will always be beaten by it.

That said, Talking the Walk is easier to appreciate and embrace as an idea than an actual reading experience. The more journalistic prose of the second section moves along briskly, the narratives of triumph and defeat being rather easy to latch onto and invest in, but too often does the textbook format render the writing itself inert, while (as is the case with any textbook) infinitely complex ideas become woefully oversimplified. In many ways, this is a book that needs to exist, and perhaps to even criticize it in the name of readability is to miss the point entirely. However, politically righteous activist instruction and readerly engagement need not be mutually exclusive, and more attention to the latter would have been much appreciated in this particular case.

—Max Tremblay



Lockpick Pornography
by Joey Comeau
134 pgs • $10 (plus $3 shipping if mail ordered)
Loose Teeth
www.looseteeth.ca

This book finds a heterophobic gay young punk dude trying to live his life in a CrimethInc sort of style (kicking in a TV screen while a politicians' debate is showing makes him "feel like I'm participating in the political system"). He's also into disruptive transvestitism (attending a lesbian ball in drag and declaring from the poetry stage "What the hell is wrong with lesbians, because cock is awesome") and gender-identity defiance (from a prank phone call: "A man should never hit a woman...Wrong...Hasn't it occurred to you that gender is an illusion? I mean, what if a pussy little faggot punched one of those chunked up body builder girls with a clit like a three foot cock?"). Instead of working for money he burglarizes hetero family homes.

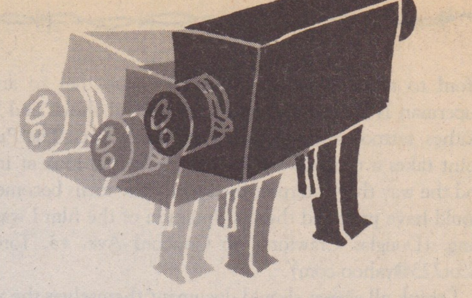
The book covers an exciting few weeks in his life. He and his fuckbuddy team up with a gay woman and a teenage punk girl who "identifies" male for a series of adventures. These include complaining to a McDonalds' manager that the soda they were served "made them gay," dressing up as cartoon characters and breaking into schools and homes to plant copies of a book they've written for children about a boy who likes to dress up as a girl, and kidnapping the son of a right-wing TV preacher.

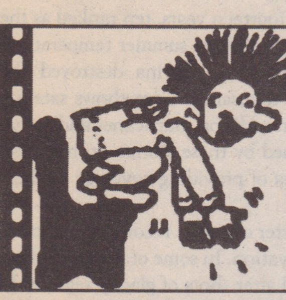
The first half of the book throws plenty of gay sex at you (not porno book graphic. but close). As the plot thickens, the sex dies down. I found the gay sex scenes a bit disturbing despite all my PC training (guess I was just born this way), and maybe you will too. But so what, they're just an occasional paragraph in a book that is funny and fun to read! BTW, the title alludes too the main character's lockpick skills, essential to his lifestyle and the book-planting plan.

While the reading community will probably place the book in the world of "Gay Literature," I thought it had a more universal message. This fellow is living with an "us vs. them" mindset and clear ideas of how "them" think and behave. Throughout the book, his expectations turn out to be wrong. The series of prank calls he makes to a woman he imagines to be a square, unthinking, super straight cookie cutter suburban Republican housewife end up not being acts of intellectual terrorism but a bridge to compassion. His rejection of "gender identities" fails him when the male-identifying punk girl tries to fuck him. And the little boy they kidnap fails to behave like a kidnappee or a right-winger. Despite the main character's expectations, people are just people, not machines programmed with socio-political behavioral guidelines. Perhaps this is not the author's intended "message," but it made me find the book satisfying. If you know anyone who likes to politicize everything ("When I puked outside that 7-11, I struck a blow against the Capitalist Pig system!"), either this book will make them think twice or it will help you get a good laugh!

—Seth Hollander

MOVIES





BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

I'LL STICK TO MY GUNS

I am a college graduate. I have a BS degree in film from Boston University. Although I really enjoyed going to college and met some of my best friends there, I probably could have made it to where I am without it. You won't see me contemplating going back to school or anything like that. These days I prefer to learn on my own.

Art School Confidential is the story of Jerome, a kid who likes to draw and decides to go to art school because of Audrey, the beautiful art model he saw in the school's brochure. There are many worse reasons to go to art school, but there are also many better ones. As it turns out Jerome is one of the more talented students in his class. Yet, in the art world, as in music, film or any other creative field, having talent is just the tip of the iceberg. Success usually hinges on some weird coincidence, being in the right place at the right time or knowing the right people.

Jerome has your typical freshman year experience. He has two roommates who are very unlike him. One is a junior year filmmaker whose grandfather is paying for his student film and the other is a closeted fashion designer. **Art School Confidential** is brimming with stereotypes. The school is filled with resentful teachers who haven't made it and students who over think things too much, applying insightful meaning where there usually isn't any. There are all sorts of peripheral characters, like the alumnus who is now a famous artist and thinks he is better than everyone else, as well as the coffee shop owner who takes credit for discovering anyone who graduates from the school.

I guess I am as cynical about higher education as the makers of **Art School Confidential** are. I can see that as an instant turn off to the average person. There are a few funny jokes about art students in **Art School Confidential**. The ending is one of those Hollywood, anti-Hollywood endings where it isn't quite a happy one, but when you think about it, it is. Actually, it is more truthful than most movies. I think that is why people don't like it. It could easily crush your dreams. The frankness of it is what appealed to me. But then again I am the one person who was rooting for Jason Dean to blow up the school in **Heathers**.

The Proposition was more of a surprise, wrapped in an Australian western. Nick Cave wrote the film, which should be enough incentive to go see it. Yet, to be honest, I went to see **The Proposition** mostly because it was playing at my local theater The Parkway, which happens to be the only theater around here that has a liquor license. There's nothing like a pitcher of beer, a large popcorn, and a movie to make my Saturday night.

The Proposition is set around the outlaw Irish Burns brothers. During the opening shoot out, the police capture the two younger brothers. They really want the oldest, most ruthless of the clan, Arthur. Police Captain Stanley makes an agreement with the middle brother Charlie that if he kills his elder brother, he and the youngest Mikey will be set free. Would you be able to kill your brother? I wouldn't.

The Proposition is one of the most violent films I have seen recently. While still digesting one brutal act, another would pop up so quickly; it was wildly shocking and gruesome. Combined with the intense morality tale, it was one great film.

The DVD **Anarchism In America** includes two '80s documentaries examining the presence of Anarchism in the United States. 1981's **Anarchism In America** has the filmmakers traveling across the country in a RV talking to different people in various communities about their political beliefs. The premise being that the widely held American belief in individual freedom is the essential ideal of anarchism. Most people have been misled about what anarchism is and the filmmakers are out to show the history of America life and the way Anarchism exists in it.

Anarchism In America has some great interviews and archival footage. Of course, there is footage of Emma Goldman. Goldman is asked if she will stop giving speeches since she is being threatened with deportation. She defiantly replies, "I'll stick to my guns." Also introduced are her lesser-known contemporaries such as Mildred Loomis. Then to show that not all Anarchists are on the left, there is an interview with former Republican speechwriter Karl Hess. Hess believes that Republicans and Anarchists really want the same things, less government interference in people's lives. Punk even gets introduced into the mix momentarily with the Dead Kennedys.

Anarchism In America is an interesting introduction to Anarchist principles. I could have done without the somewhat annoying soundtrack of music such as a live version of the Sex Pistol's "Anarchy In the UK" rewritten for the US and Steve Miller Band's "Living In the USA." Overall, though, the documentary is very enjoyable.

The other film is 1980's **The Free Voice Of Labor: The Jewish Anarchists**. This film looks at the history of the *Freie Arbeiter Stimme*, a Jewish Anarchist newspaper started in the late 1800s. The paper is shutting down because the publishers cannot afford to print it at the low subscription rate of $7 per year. Yet, they don't want to raise the rates since they know the people who subscribe won't be able to afford it.

Freie Arbeiter Stimme started as a way for Jewish immigrants to communicate and organize when they first arrived in the United States. After being disillusioned when they came to this country and discovered working conditions were worse than what they experienced back home, the Jewish workers began to demand improvements, including a shorter workday. Being pacifists, the Anarchists were also against US involvement in World War I. Watching this you see some enlightening resemblance to the current war mania. During WWI, Americans were so anti-German that people weren't allowed to eat sauerkraut; it was renamed liberty cabbage. Red paint was also banned during the war. Things surprisingly haven't changed.

The Free Voice Of Labor: The Jewish Anarchists has some great footage of the early strikes as well as interviews with the publishers of the newspaper. When asked by the filmmaker if they were too idealistic, the secretary of the newspaper replied, "You have to be idealistic. Otherwise you might as well take a gun and blow your brains out."

The two documentaries make a great case for Anarchism in the present US. I see an opportunity for someone to get inspired and look at the way the political climate has changed for the American Anarchists since the early '80s. (www.akpress.org)

The Punks Are Alright starts with an intriguing premise. It begins with the Canadian punk band The Forgotten Rebels. Reformed and playing to enthusiastic audiences, the band sees a new generation of fans. Off in Brazil, The Forgotten Rebels have influenced the band Blind Pigs. Then the Blind Pigs receive an email from a kid in Indonesia who wants a CD, but has no money. The band sends him a CD and then he forms a band that is influenced by The Blind Pigs. I was hoping the documentary would continue that way with the Indonesian band influencing a band in the Czech Republic or Turkey and so on. It would be a great statement on the power of punk and how it spreads worldwide outside the usual commercial channels.

Unfortunately, the lineage stops with the Indonesian band. Dolly, the Blind Pigs fan, works in a factory where he earns a very small wage. His band can only afford to rehearse twice a year. Compare that to another Indonesian band Superman Is Dead who plays huge festival shows and have all the equipment, clothes, tattoos, and other punk accoutrements. **The Punks Are Alright** at this point takes a turn toward a more traditional look at international punk bands and the way they interpret the scene. The focus becomes poverty and religion. I would have preferred the continuation of the film I was watching at the beginning. (Douglas Crawford, 46 Concord Ave. #3, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, ascot223@yahoo.com)

I think all scenes should document themselves the way **Rural Rock & Roll** does. **Rural Rock & Roll** shows the world what is happening musically in Humboldt County, California. There are all sorts of bands, different genres and levels of ability. They play shows together and have fun while doing it. Then they get up and go to their jobs the next day. There is also the local DJ and zine publisher to promote the scene.

There is a music scene in every little town in the world. Most of these musicians have no delusions of a musical career bringing them fame. It is fun to see bands simply doing it for the sheer pleasure of rockin' out. **Rural Rock & Roll** captures a moment in time in one area. If every scene started documenting itself, it would probably be an impossible task to watch them all. But I'd be willing to try. (www.jensenrufe.com)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146. If you have a film screening in San Francisco, email me at carolynmrr@juno.com. I will go see it.

FINAL CUT

BY STEVEN SPINALI

CONVENIENT EXCUSES

At the moment of this writing, George Bush Jr. has just failed to enjoin the Senate to vote in a constitutional amendment to "assure the sanctity of marriage." This comes at the lowest approval ratings of any American president since Nixon, despite the core support of the so-called "Red States." If you've ever listened to commercial radio from these states (often wall-to-wall religious chatter between hymns), you begin to appreciate his strategy.

After watching **An Inconvenient Truth**, the new documentary spearheaded by former Vice President Al Gore, another reason comes to mind for this failed constitutional amendment: Bush, by ignoring the vastly more significant environmental issues, has hatched a plot to increase hydrogen monoxide levels, elevate water levels, and thus engulf all of the Blue States—which just happen to be coastal. How often have neo-cons just wanted blot California from the map?

So okay, the theory is facetious (though no more so than the proposed constitutional amendment). Bush seems to regard environmental protection only as an annoyance and has reversed nearly all of Clinton's work in the area. Fittingly, the only national park created during George W's administration was a desert—the Sand Dunes of Colorado.

One might think it unfortunate that Al Gore wasn't able to muster any level of humor, humanity, and intelligence during his presidential bid. If that's the case, your ill ease will be redoubled after watching **An Inconvenient Truth**. He walks the stage easily, cracking jokes—the reverse of his wooden Vice Presidential image. Although the film is more likely to be seen by progressives, its content is such a convincing barrage of fact and image that it's hard to imagine any reasonable person being unmoved.

Directed by Davis Guggenhein, **An Inconvenient Truth** is an expanded version of a PowerPoint presentation Gore has been giving, with variations, for almost twenty years. The time has rolled past, but his premise has remained the same: America, along with the most prominent industrialized nations, has pushed our planet to the edge ecological disaster. Pundits have been saying this kind of thing before, but rarely with such focus and urgency.

He communicates easily in front of a movie-sized screen, the audience in his back pocket. Maybe it was his recent stint as a college lecturer, but he comes off as informed and accessible. He quotes from an ocean of statistics, but tries to make even the bar graphs somehow entertaining.

One of his statistics: Only 57% of Americans accept global warming as a problem. Then he quotes a randomized review of published scientific articles; out of nearly 900 studies, all concur that global warming is a fact. Al Gore relates the episode of how Bush's environmental advisor—a former oil lobbyist—attempted to edit an unflattering report to make its conclusions seem more ambiguous. The fault was so egregious that the man was fired—a rarity in the Bush White House.

As Gore continues, it's not exactly front-page news that serious things are happening to our environment. Out of the last fourteen years, ten ranked as the hottest ever logged. In Europe, thousands have died from summer temperatures that peaked at over 120 degrees. Super-storms like Katrina destroyed the Louisiana levee system and killed or displaced thousands. Gore shows satellite video of the more obvious and violent events. In addition, hurricanes and tornados are appearing in places previously untouched by these storms. In response, some insurance agencies are rethinking the idea of providing coverage to these risky areas.

Storms that directly affect humans are a matter of public record, but much of the damage occurs outside normal human observation. In some of the most effective footage of the film, Gore shows before and after shots of glacier regions. In some cases, entire glaciers have melted or dried up, leaving lakes or scoured valleys. While it's easy to argue theory, it's hard to dismiss the pictures, and Gore's audience murmurs in muted shock at one photograph after another rolls across the screen.

In an animated sequence, Gore describes how polar bears—creatures that hunt on the dwindling ice sheets—are now starting to drown—the first time that's ever been seen.

Al Gore pulls together all of this evidence to cinch his central argument: carbon dioxide from petrochemical fuels and coal burning fuels have begun to warm the air, setting a string of accelerating effects. America, followed by Europe and China, are the main offenders. We don't know if the current effects can be reversed.

Gore's most spectacular showpiece involves the argument on the cyclical nature of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Some have tried to suggest that CO^2 and temperature variations are normal, and fall within a historical range. After a visit to the Antarctic where core samples of ice were studied for carbon dioxide, Gore indulges his audience in some drama. He shows the long line of a CO^2 graph as it rises and falls through the centuries. The variations do indeed seem normal. Then he mounts a crane, which raises him to the ceiling of the auditorium. As the carbon dioxide readings bring us to the late 20th century and beyond, the crane almost scrapes the hall's cavernous ceiling. The CO^2 levels shoot up almost vertically. As the audience laughs uneasily, the "natural variations" argument seems almost like a joke.

Gore tries to append an empowering conclusion to his story, but the vastness of the problem can only leave one troubled. After you've seen the South Polar cap cracking open—an event that's never occurred in recorded history—one suspects things are going to get a whole lot worse before they have any chance of getting better.

An Inconvenient Truth mostly stays on the topic, but also veers into the personal events that led to his point of view. As he's quick to admit, however, it's politics that's largely stymied environmental progress. Gore is a political animal, and his narrative is both a story of ecological deterioration and of his interest in the subject since childhood. He takes us on a trip to that fateful 2000 presidential election, which seemed to him seemed almost a referendum on these same policies. Then, as now, the environment is for many a back-burner issue, lacking the immediacy of homeland security, education, or the economy.

An Inconvenient Truth may go some way to correct this. Unlike angrier documentary rants that have come out recently, this film shows every possibility of reframing the national debate. Terrorism is one issue, and it would probably be foolish to discount it; but the current changes in the environment suggest an issue of truly vast importance. The gaping spending deficit, wars in the Middle East, crime, and drugs (as well as non-issues like gay marriage) seem comparatively petty.

Gore suggests that terror makes better headlines than a global crisis that's gradual and, to some, ambiguous. If half of all Americans are unconvinced about global warming, a combination of bad information and misinformation would seem to be the culprit. One only hopes that this information hasn't arrived too late.

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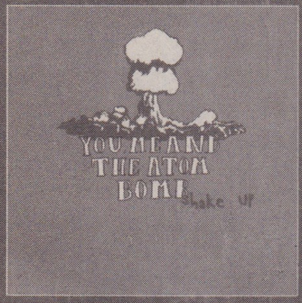
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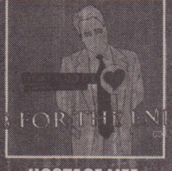

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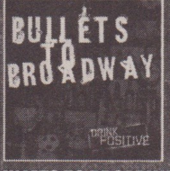
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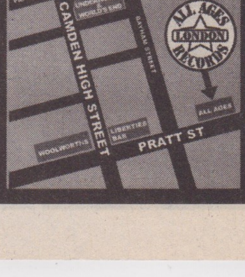
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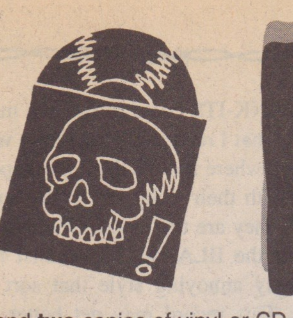
GOVERNMENT ISSUE 1982



RECORDS

Send **two** copies of vinyl or CD-only releases (if on both formats, please send the *vinyl*) to **MRR, PO Box 460760, SF, CA 94146, USA.** We will review everything that falls within our area of coverage: punk, garage, hardcore—no major labels or labels distributed by major-affiliated distros. Please include postpaid price and contact information. Let us know where your band is from! *No reviews of test pressings or promo CDs without final artwork.* Send demo tapes and CD-R-only releases to Erin Yanke, PO Box 1113, Portland, OR 97207.

Reviewers: Tim Brooks (TB), Mitch Cardwell (MC), Rob Coons (RC), Carl Cordova (CC), Paul Curran (PC), Andy Darling (AD), Dr. Dante (DD), Sean Dougan (SD), Nic Eagle (NE), Jonathan Floyd (JF), Jeff Heermann (JH), Vince Horner (VH), Layla Gibbon (LG), Chris Hubbard (CS), Kenny Kaos (KK), Carolyn Keddy (CK), Ramsey Kanaan (RK), Will Kinser (WK), Elliott Lange (EL), Ray Lujan (RL), Hal MacLean (HM), Allan McNaughton (AM), Golnar Nikpour (GN), Bruce Roehrs (BR), Ken Sanderson (KS), Martin Sorrondeguy (MS), Steve Spinali (SS), Brian Stern (BS), Ryan Wells (RW), Shane White (SW).

2000 DS – "Presents Crowzone" CD

This is totally horrible. I have no idea what to say. I googled them to try and get some idea of what they were about, since I don't listen to this type of thing at all, but just got a bunch of ZOUNDS lyrics and references to middle class people who have been unable to get dirty squatters out of their gardens. The full name of the band is 2000 DIRTY SQUATTERS. Anyway the music is lame puerile crust hardcore, really badly mixed with a very prominent vocalist who sounds like he should be singing for a pub based heavy metal band circa '83. Probably this is another band that means a lot to certain members of the punk community, but personally I wouldn't even use this as a coaster. The lyrics are all printed in SLAYER *Reign in Blood* font, and feature masterful poetry such as this: "It's coming soon/the year of the dragon/feel him stirring/getting ready to rise." Seriously dude, that's undeniable SPINAL TAP. I think this is more anarcho pie punk, but you know, more from the Dio school. Yuck. (LG)

(Scrap, 17A Stoneleigh St, Notting Hill, London W11 4DU, UNITED KINGDOM)

G.G. ALLIN AND ANTISEEN – "Murder Junkies" CD

Be it with ANTISEEN or any other band, I just can't get into any G.G. material other than his early JABBERS junk. I'm a "Cheri Love Affair" kind of guy, what can I say? If I have the timeline correct, this material came immediately before the MURDER JUNKIES stint that brought G.G's legendary end in the early '90s. I can't imagine anyone citing this as great G.G. material, regardless of the (inexplicably) much-loved ANTISEEN's presence. Furthermore, I doubt ANTISEEN fans see this as a high-water mark for them either. These claims are made assuming that die-hard fans of G.G. or ANTISEEN actually care about what they are hearing, which might be giving them too much credit. Fine as an artifact of the "can't look away" car crash sensationalism of The Outlaw Scumfuc, but nothing I'd fucking spin for any reason other than a drunken laugh. (MC)

(TKO, 8941 Atlanta Ave., #505, Huntington Beach, CA 92646)

ANGELIC UPSTARTS – "The Independent Punk Singles Collection" 2XLP

I know what you're thinking—"Nice one! A double-LP of the UPSTARTS' best singles, sign me up!"—and while this does contain a few dynamite punk anthems, the fact is that the word "independent" in the title of this collection should be a red flag to fans in the know. Working-class, anti-fashion, anti-cop, anti-fascist second-wave punks (and Oi! progenitors, although I'd hesitate call them Oi! themselves, despite being adopted as one of that movement's flagship acts), Tyneside's ANGELIC UPSTARTS signed to Warner Brothers after their first single. That single, "The Murder Of Liddle Towers," a shout-along power ballad about police brutality that is actually more pub rock than punk rock (although the B-side, "Police Oppression," cranked things up nicely) naturally kicks off this comp, but things go downhill shortly after that (peaking briefly with the "Woman in Disguise / Lust for Glory" single). Much of the UPSTARTS' best stuff came out on major labels, which is why this double album is padded out with live tracks and second-rate B-sides (the funk-rock of "Don't Stop," from 1983's *Solidarity* 12" comes to mind): A true and comprehensive singles collection for this band would be awesome, especially if it came with some decent liner notes, old interviews, photos, *anything* but the shitty pixilated reproductions of the single covers here. There's a discography, but absolutely no other documentation. By all means get this, but if you're new to the ANGELIC UPSTARTS, don't stop at this—you've got to seek out the essential 7" trifecta of *I'm an Upstart*, *Teenage Warning*, and *Never 'Ad Nothin'*. (AM)

(Get Back, via Aretina 25, 50069 Sieci (Firenze), ITALY, www.abraxasrecords.com)

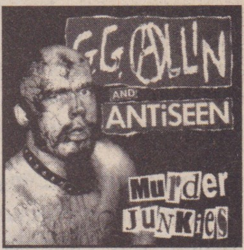
APATHETIC YOUTH / FINAL DRAFT – Split EP

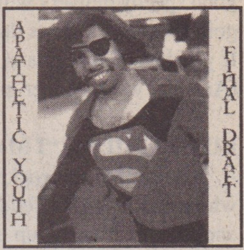
A far cry from MAN IS THE BASTARD or CROSSED OUT, three-piece APATHETIC YOUTH pounds out nine tracks of power-violence minus the violence and power. Short songs, predominantly fast with lots of changes. Yada yada yada. The vocals are more grounded in straightforward hardcore, which would be fine if it didn't seem to detract from and water down the music. FINAL DRAFT offers up six songs of a similar amateur style, edging up a little closer to the fence of grind. They're tighter musically, but the vocals are of the constipated cookie-monster style that does even less for me. Another great way to waste six minutes of your life… (VH)

(Deep Six, PO Box 6911, Burbank, Ca 91510-6911)

ATTENTAT SONORE – "Barricades 1905" EP

Fuck yes you motherfucking punks! ATTENTAT





ATTENTAT
SONORE
1905
barricades

BAD LIEUTENANTS
Every
Time
I
Come
Around...

SONORE from Limoges, France has another meat & potatoes, bristle & studs, punk bombshell for you kids! This EP kicks a whole lot of skinny punk butt! ATTENTAT SONORE has been making their brand of boisterous, politically charged punk rock since the late eighties in one incarnation or another. This EP does not disappoint! Long live ATTENTAT SONORE! (BR)
(Do It Yourself, BP 135, 87004 Limoges Cedex 1, FRANCE, www.attentatsonore.com)

BAD LIEUTENANTS – "Every Time I Come Around" CD

Proficient musically, dumbed down lyrically bar punk from the Boston area. Really this is sort of ho-hum and I was hoping for much more. (JF)
(Teenage Heart, www.badlieutenants.com)

THE BANANAS – "Forbidden Fruit" LP

For many, and justifiably so, this now long-running Sacto band (ex-SEWER TROUT) epitomizes the happy, sweaty atmosphere of a crowded basement punk show. *Forbidden Fruit*, with its snotty-as-hell screaming and falling-apartedness, is sloppy enough, catchy enough, and fast enough not to fall into the too-saccharine or too un-punk trap of much current pop punk. I can be a pretty cynical lady, but I have to say that these songs charmed the hell out of me. Recommended. (GN)
(Recess, www.recessrecords.com)

BANNER PILOT – "Pass The Poison" CD

Sounds like a great new band to me. A mix of DILLINGER 4 and early JAWBREAKER. A good speedy delivery with the hoarse vocal thing going on. Seven songs that sound like a short EP. If you love *Unfun* this is a band for you. (RL)
(Arsenic, www.banner–pilot.com)

BILLY CHILD – "I Made Up My Mind"

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out who these Japanese Teddyboys draw their influence from. Mixing up some poppy punk not unlike the GROOVY GHOULIES with some off your dad's old time wedding classic favorites like CHUCK BERRY, BUDDY HOLLY, and BO DIDDLEY to name a few. My girlfriend likes it and hey, that's good enough for me. (SD)
(Tear It Up, Spijnd 1, 5611 HV Eindhoven, GERMANY, www.tear-it-up-records.nl)

BITTER END – "Mind In Chains" CDEP

As much as I hate to admit it, the straight edge hardcore scene is still feeling the lasting effects of NO WARNING, particularly their moshtastic (sic) full-length *Ill Blood*. This six-song CDEP by this Texas band is no exception. Like GUNS UP!, BITTER END reminds me too much of NO WARNING. But if angry, late-'80s NYHC like KILLING TIME and BREAKDOWN (whom the cover on here) is your thing, then BITTER END is as good as they come. (CC)
(Malfunction, www.malfunctionrecords.com)

BLACK DONNELLYS – "Life's a Scream… Again!" EP

Burly, charging hardcore from this Canadian band who, according to the liner notes, has been around in some form or another since 1982. The four songs on this EP were originally released on a cassette in 1987, and I believe the rest of the material from that tape was reissued by Audiofellatio in '03 as the *Life's a Scream* EP. Here, BLACK DONNELLYS' slightly rockin' hardcore sound is characterized by the chunky, buzzsaw guitar that owes as much to MOTÖRHEAD as it does any punk band. Listen to fellow Ontarians DIRECT ACTION for reference. Ultimately this falls somewhere in the nebulous middle ground between "lost classic" and "not worth it." (CS)
($6 N. America/$7 World ppd: Audiofellatio, 251 West Ave. N., Hamilton, ON, L8L 5C8, CANADA, www.audiofellatio.com)

BLACK LIPS – "Party At Rob's House" EP

......I guess this record is what it says it is, three songs live at Rob's house in Atlanta.....and all three songs *rock*!!!!!! The BLACK LIPS are currently winning the race in the new young savage garage revival....they're the best sloppy lo-fi act with catchy hooks to come around in years....*no shit*!!!! Believe the hype......!!!!! Also, ladies take notice that these lads are young and very cute......fuck 'em now before they become big stars and no longer desire your silly little teenage pussies!!!!! Look what happened to Jack White.....now only movie stars get to suck his cock......!!!!! (SW)
(Rob's House, www.robshouserecords.com)

BLACK RADIO – "Black Radio" EP

The production on this is spot on. They hit the nail right on the head with the bass tone. Think a more hardcore MOTÖRHEAD with slick production (but not too slick). When not sounding like Lemmy and crew, these four tracks remind me of DEAD STOP. The back up vocalist doesn't fit the sound at all, almost to the point that he ruins the songs, but the lead singer has enough of a presence that I can overlook it. I would listen to this again. Limited to 500, no lyric sheet. (CC)
(www.blackradiorocks.com)

BLANK-ITS – "Happy Accidents" LP

Every review I read about this band likes to compare them to the URINALS. Yet when I saw them live I didn't feel or hear it; instead they came across as more of a run of the mill arty garage band. Well, on *Happy Accidents* I want to say that the BLANK-ITS come across at a midway point from what I read and what I have witnessed. I can see where the URINALS comparisons come in with their jerky arty style, but I also don't think they are that good. One thing I do know is that the BLANK-ITS vocalist has one really nasally annoying style that sort of grows on you. This record may get better on later listens but on first couple of spins I ain't feeling it. (JF)
(Empty, www.emptyrecords.com)

BLUE BLOODS – "Death Of A Salesman" CD

Fourth full length I believe from these Boston street punkers. Fortunately, they eschew any of the Irish/Celtic/folk posturing of the DROPKICK MURPYS, and stick to the straight–ahead, melodic, in your face with the gang chants and whoa–ohs championed by the STREET DOGS, et al. Nothing outstanding, but a solid punch to the kidneys, for sure. (RK)
(I Scream, www.iscreamrecords.com)

BRAIN HANDLE – "Scratching At My Skull" EP

Don't' let the horrible cover art fool you, Pittsburgh's BRAIN HANDLE will have you hardcore junkies seething with rage as they rip through four tracks of no frills early-'80s style American HC. It's energetic, fast, and straightforward with a touch of melody and hooky guitar leads—"Scratching at My Skull" in particular is a scorcher. The vocal delivery has such a classic '80s feel. Check it out! (VH)
(Fashionable Idiots, PO Box 580131, Minneapolis, MN 55458)

BRIGADE – "Operation Bite Back" CD

Nothing to do with the Stern brothers, these guys hail from Finland and play up-tempo street punk with all the trimmings. Nothing startling or original but not bad either—if you like BOMBSHELL ROCKS you would probably dig it. They could get better; I recommend listening to more SMALLTOWN and less RANCID. (AD)
(www.brigadebrigade.com)

BROKEN BOTTLES – "Suburban Dream / Broken Bottles"

It's clear that these guys want you to think that they've been heavily influenced by the likes of TSOL, the ADOLESCENTS, the STITCHES... There's a not so fine line between being influenced by a band (or era) and imitating that band (or era). To me, BROKEN BOTTLES sounds like a SOCIAL DISTORTION cover band, only they're not doing any SOCIAL DISTORTION covers. Hell, the singer's name is Jess the Mess. Hello? Rhymes with Ness. (KK)
(TKO, 89451 Atlanta Ave #505, Huntington Beach, CA 92646)

CAREER SUICIDE – s/t LP

Timely reissue of the first 7" (plus one bonus track) by one of the best hardcore bands of recent years. Somehow they manage to capture the explosive energy of first wave California hardcore bands CIRCLE JERKS/BLACK FLAG, and like those seminal bands they add what many of today's retro hardcore bands seem to forget—hooks. This shit is catchy as scabies from a crusty, every song a mix tape opener. The band have proved they are no one trick pony with a bunch of top notch releases, but this still stands as one of the best. Now that FUCKED UP is doing double LPs and records for hip fashion mags this band can officially become your favorite bunch of Canadians. (TB)

(Deranged, www.derangedrecords.com)

CF/98 – "Enjoy" CD EP

Polish band. Two women. Three men. And a female vocalist who sounds very close to the sweet pop–punk tones of DISCOUNT's chanteuse. Musically, they're much more akin to any number of Warped Tour fare—well effected indie pop–punk alternative stuff. With a title like *Enjoy*, I had high hopes of a decent DESCENDENTS knockoff, but alas, it was not to be. The only break from this horrendous form of American cultural imperialism is the thanks list, which is all in Polish! (RK)

(Pasazer,www.pasazer.pl)

CHEVEU – "Clara Vénus / Superhéro"

Totally synth-damaged art noise that overshoots punk entirely and lands itself squarely in the industrial camp. Layers of analog distortion, samples, primitive drum machine beats, and redlined guitars compete to obscure any hint of tune, melody or song, which only serves to make me agitated and paranoid. Best enjoyed on a boat on the river Seine after two bottles of extra-strength cough syrup. (AM)

(Royal c/o Pollymaggoo, 5 Rue Guy Môquet, F-75017 Paris, FRANCE, pollymaggoo@free.fr)

THE CHIOCULOS – "Hey Little Girl/Walk On"

The Chioculos are four regular guys—regular guys that happen to make up the MOJOMATICS and the KING KHAN AND BBQ SHOW. A merger of this magnitude is guaranteed not to suck, so my job here is merely to inform you of this platter's existence. Essentially, this comes off as a fuller version of both bands (duh), but with the playfulness traded in for some serious BO DIDDLEY worship. Now you know. Let the hunting begin! (MC)

(Yakisakana, 51 Rue Renaudel, 76 100 Rouen, FRANCE)

CIRIL – "Pink Cave/Metal Postcard"

CIRIL, from Southern California, has been at it for a while now, putting out records that people inevitably compare to RUDIMENTARY PENI (both sonically and aesthetically). This record is no different in that regard, though the two songs on this single (one original and one SIOUXIE & THE BANSHEES cover) never get close to the thrashy hardcore speeds of some of their other stuff. Instead, both songs stay at a near-dirge, at times reminding me just a bit of the BIRTHDAY PARTY, especially vocally. Everything about this record is OK, and I actually really like the dark goth-punk influences this band mines, but something continues to keep me from having more than a passing interest in their records, even as they continue to grow and evolve. I think the reality is that it's a dangerous game reminding people of vocalists like Nick Blinko or Nick Cave—any imitator is going to invariably fall flat. (GN)

(Vinyl Dog, 8941 Atlanta Ave. #505, Huntington Beach, CA 92646)

CITY MOUSE – "Independence Day" CD

Eight tracks of female fronted snotty pop-punk. A little reminiscent of early MUFFS, with some fine vocals with a catch, and melodic guitar work. For some reason it reminds me of the BUZZCOCKS less bubble–gum moments, which is not such a bad thing, either. (RK)

(Eugene, www.eugenerecords.com)

THE CLASH – "A Night of Treason" LP

This boot was recorded likely in 1976 at Kensington's Royal College of Art, most likely on a hand-held cassette recorder. Of course, given its vintage, the audience is small, and the sound ultra-primitive. Occasional songs like "Protex Blue" are partially out of tune, and there are long, nervous breaks between songs. Forgive these rather serious misgivings, and you get a feeling for the CLASH in their early period, unruly crowd and all. Comes on festive pink vinyl, which unfortunately doesn't improve the sound. For dedicated CLASH fans and completists. (SS)

(Trade Mark, no address)

CLOCKCLEANER – "Missing Dick/By the Door"

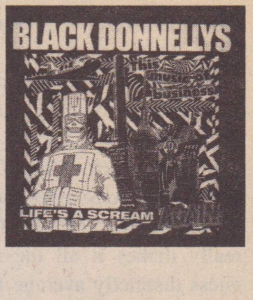
This band kind of threw me a curve ball. I am not sure exactly what I was expecting, but dark, dirge-y, and fucking excellent arty hardcore it was not. I guess that even though I knew that they are artier than the "average" Manic Ride Records band, having a full-length on that label made me anticipate something a bit more straightforward. The A-side is an original, and I seriously listened to it four times in a row before I could even flip the record over (and then I flipped the record over and listened again). Despite the slow tempo and the noisy weirdness of this song, there is totally a catchy hook or two buried in there. The guitars have this crazy, crunchy, fucked up sound that drives the song along under creepy, echo-laden vocals that I would actually be tempted to sing along to if I could figure out what the fuck the singer is going on about. The B-side is a CRUCIFUCKS cover, which is pretty appropriate 'cause CLOCKCLEANER is as obnoxious and bizarre as that band, though I don't think they necessarily sound like each other. It's not often I think this of a punk band, but I even have to admit that some of the sounds emitted from this single were anxiety-inducing enough to actually get under my skin. I am way into it. (GN)

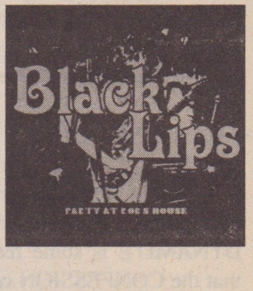
(Hit Dat, 3233 Sonia Trail, Ellicott City, MD 21043, www.hitdatrecords.com)

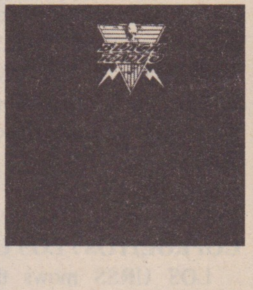
COACCION – "Amordazado" EP

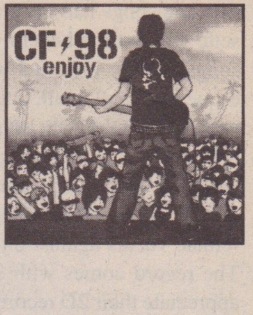
COACCION from Mexico kicks down some straight-up Scandinavian-influenced political crust that holds a nice edge of metallic distortion. This is dark and pummeling with strongly growled vocals. I dig it and I think you will too. (RC)

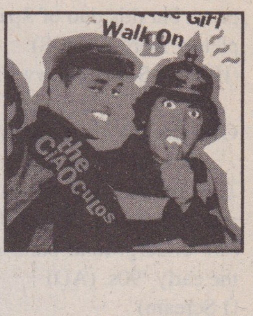
(Despotic, PO Box 832, Long Beach, CA 90801, despoticpunk@yahoo.com)

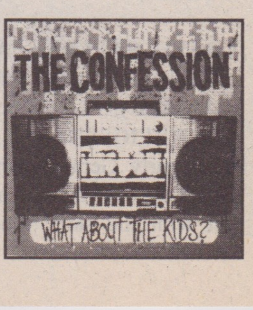












CONFESSION – "What About The Kids?" CD

Ten tracks of fairly nondescript street punk. It has plenty of energy, but nothing particularly stands out, though I dig the "Smash Fascism" logo on the back of the CD booklet. The fact that these guys are Swedes (with more than a nod to BOMBSHELL ROCKS) on a German label, really makes it all the more unremarkable. I guess distinctly average rock music (especially when sung in English) sounds, well, distinctly average, wherever it is championed across the globe... (RK)

(MSM, www.msm1279records.com)

THE CONFESSION / THE DYNAMITE – split LP

Who the fuck releases a split LP? That's just plain stupid. It's clear from the cover that the DYNAMITE is some real rock 'n' rollers and that the CONFESSION counts a dwarf amongst their fans. The DYNAMITE is decent enough, playing in a melodic style and sort of reminding me of the SPENT IDOLS. The CONFESSION is also melodic, but plays more of a hardcore style of music and incorporate the sing-along thingy that reminds me of early German hardcore. I like it. (KK)

(Tuned In)

COPROLITOS / LOS URSS – split EP

LOS URSS mows through its mid-speed punkers with raw production that sounds almost as if the songs had been sung directly onto cassette without the benefit of a mixing board, the songs heavily inflected with a JOHN LYDON-esque irony; all in all, not very notable. The flip, with COPROLITOS, rings in with four tracks, but the best is "Nostalgica," which alternates outraged male and female vocals not unlike DIRT; their other songs features outraged female vocals against un-notable arrangements. The record comes with 3D glasses so you can appreciate their 2D record cover. Lots of room to grow, but this duo of Spanish bands is not completely there yet. (SS)

(Hillside Strangler, www.hillsidestrangler.rk)

CRACKJAW – "Giants from the Stereo" CD

Slick sounding indie/emo rock from Detroit. This reminds me of all those bands that got snapped up by majors during the great corporate-underground-band-signing-gang-bang of the early '90s. (AD)

(I Scream)

CRAPSCRAPERS – "Abschreckung" LP

Berlin, Germany '82 (to '84!) single-line, rudimentary, 1-2 mechanical thrash, like VORKREIGSPHASE, MALINHEADS, or other early German hardcore and proto-hardcore. Less over-the-top than the aforementioned, but with the same mechanical ram-charging delivery through a din of basement and live recordings. This collects the bands output—28 tracks (with duplicate versions of some tracks on alternate recordings) from demos and a few compilations—in a homemade sleeve with an extensive lyric and info scrapbook largely in German. Released by a former band member in an edition of only 150 (??), insuring this band remains a footnote for collectors and grad student dissertations on 1980s German hardcore. (KS)

(Rotten Totten, c/o Andreas Thome, Transvall Str. 13, 13351 Berlin, GERMANY)

CROW – "Bloody Tear" LP

Bloody Tear is the very, very heavily anticipated vinyl version of this long-running Japanese hardcore band's 2005 full-length CD. I'm sure many of you impatiently mail-ordered the CD from Japan long ago, and have already elaborated at length about its relative merits in your blog, but I am more a vinyl and newsprint kinda lady, so I hadn't heard *Bloody Tear* till it materialized on the bulkier format. Anyway, this album features many of CROW's more recent trademarks—gutteral and expressive vocals, heavy, searing guitar leads, and convincingly pounding drums. CROW famously shifted away from their primitive DISCHARGE-obsessed origins to a more metallic, guitar-heavy Japanese hardcore style, which they have now been at for quite some time; I think they are fairly unique among their J-core brethren in that they really don't remind me of any other one band, though they sound pretty "classic." This is a fucking awesome record from this top-tier hardcore band—dark both musically and aesthetically, inventive, and absolutely devastating—and a 2006 "must-buy" for sure. Comes with a nice poster, though I am sure the ultra-limited splatter vinyl version is gone by now. (GN)

(Prank, PO Box 410892, San Francisco, CA 94141, www.prankrecords.com)

THEE CRUCIALS – "Instant Party"

Four tracks of organ lead frat boy stomp. Chanted vocals, cheap suits, and even cheaper shades rule the day. Animal house choruses, bounced right along with a cleaner side of the '60s garage guitar sound. All very nice and well to do, but I prefer my garage dragged through an alleyway strewn with piles of dogshite, dirty needles, used rubbers, and a heavy sprinkling of smashed whiskey bottles, if ya get it. (SD)

(Smash Teen Sounds, theecrucials@hotmail.com)

CRUELTY / DISCLOSE – split EP

A DISCLOSE split 7"? No way! Forgive me if I don't have a lot to say about this side of the record—after a zillion releases, I think punk record reviewers worldwide have exhausted all available ways to describe these Japanese raw punk maestros. I will say this: the DISCLOSE songs on this split are pretty great—raw, energetic, and blown out to fuck. Hearing a new DISCLOSE record for me at this point is like getting a phone call from my parents. I mean, it's always nice to hear Kawakami's voice and all, and I feel a sort of familiar, familial love for them, but I am not like, crushed out or anything. CRUELTY, on the other hand, is a band I've heard many of my UK friends salivate over in the past year or so. I tried unsuccessfully to get my hands on a demo (feel free to send one to me, boys…), but here I am headbanging (metaphorically that is—it's hard to headbang while sitting down…actually what I'm doing is sipping some tea while typing, but I digress) to these songs, their first vinyl tracks. They rock a pretty classic crustcore/ Scandi-thrash sound, though they stay aggressively in the "hardcore" camp (as opposed to "crust"), which is my preference for sure because I am a punk and not a metalhead. I dig the singer's vocals—they have flair and are more memorable than a lot of DIS-oriented bands out there. Though English is these Brits' first language, their lyrics don't stray far from the DISCHARGE cut 'n' paste, mix 'n' match method that their Japanese record-mates also employ. Whatever, no points for originality but plenty for style—this band is totally good. Overall, both are ragin' and fairly evenly matched, making us all the "winner" on this split. (GN)

(Plague Bearer, PO Box 604, 2200 Copenhagen N, Denmark, mareridt@ofir.dk)

DAGGERS – "Tear it to Pieces" CD

Feel the stench, smell the strobe lights, taste the Pomade. *Tear It To Pieces* is slick Hollywood material dolled up in motorcycle leathers and coated with a prefab bad boy attitude—hooray for our side, right? Music-wise they're chuggy *rock rock rock* with crystal-clear lyrics about girlz and carz. Call 'em a cleaned-up HUMPERS, a watered-down CANDY SNATCHERS, or a pasteurized ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN. Dullsville. (JH)

(Catchfire Media, www.thedaggers.com)

THE DEAD HOOKERS BRIDGE CLUB – "The Hoo Dee Hoo" EP

Four tracks of CRAMPS inspired trash-a-billy from Florida's favorite sleaze balls. Switchblade hooks mixed in with some MAD DADDIES pound. Eight balls, hotrods, tattooed cheap dates, and hard liquor seem to be the drive—if that's your twang then I guess this is your thing. (SD)

(New Art School, 12864 Biscayne Blvd, #201, North Miami, Fl 33181, info@newartschool.net)

DEAD PETS – "The Revenge Of The Village Idiot" CD

A domestic release of the debut long player

from this pyscho–punk–Northern (of England)–lads–with–horns band. They're certainly not ska, or rockabilly, or even punk as such. But manage to rock up elements of each in a suitably demented rock n roll cocktail. They cover COCK SPARRER fairly faithfully (with the horns playing the lead guitar melody), which is about as accurate a snapshot of the band as you could hope for. (RK)
(www.thedeadpets.co.uk)

DEARLY DEPORTED – "Watching From A Distance" CD

These four youngsters being Belgian, but employing some cunning word-play in the title, well...I had some hopes. Certainly the English of the singer/lyricist is flawless. Could've strolled straight out of Orange County, or Chicago. There's the rub, really. I was kind of hoping for a little more than a carbon copy of RISE AGAINST, ALKALINE TRIO, LAGWAGON, et al. Alas, tis not to be. In Europe, Belgium has a reputation for being really boring. I suspect this "fact" and the band are not (necessarily) connected. (RK)
(Fun Time, www.funtimerecords.com)

A DEATH IN THE FAMILY – "This Microscopic War" CD

I've heard a lot of LEATHERFACE/HOT WATER MUSIC references being thrown about this Aussie band, and while there is definitely a hint of Stubbs and Co. (Frankie produced this) and some of the Gainsville rock it definitely stands up its own. I'm actually hearing a lot of the UK's STEEL RULES DIE; totally rocking and anthemic. The songwriting and musicianship is stellar, backed by *huge* production—this is pretty epic. If these guys were from the USA they would be huge. Excuse me while I get up and hit repeat. (TB)
(Newest Industry, Unit 100, 61 Wellfield Road, Cardiff, CF24 3DG, UNITED KINGDOM)

DEFCON 4 – "File Under Fuck" CD

This was produced by Steve Austin who if I am not mistaken was in TODAY IS THE DAY? If that means anything to you. I have *waaaaay* too much '90s hardcore trivia stored in my brain. Anyway, this is heavy Boston hardcore with lots of vengeance styled lyrics. Not my kind of thing, to revert to cliché. (LG)
(Black Box Recordings, PO Box 110-454, Williamsburg Station, Brooklyn NY 11211)

DEGENERATE ELITE – CD

This is a horrific combination of crossover and pop punk. The musical embodiment of "The Thing That Should Not Be," to paraphrase METALLICA. If you like mosh parts with Fozzie Bear style vox this will be your total jam. (LG)
(2918 W Idlewild Ave, Tampa FL 33614)

THE DEGENERICS – "The Final Chapter" EP

Some hessian-tinged youth crew. I can imagine a sea of baseball hat clad dudes doing that meaningful nod thing that semi emo sXe warrior types did in the mid '90s. Or perhaps moshing. You know. This is a dude time record. I always feel weird when I get this type of thing to review because I don't know the significance of this band or how they relate to that bro world at all. They hail from Brunswick, NJ and this is their last record. You probably already know if you like them? Maybe? It really sounds like '90s post youth crew sXe to me, but I have no idea if they are actually sXe or whatever… The guitars have a total IRON MAIDEN thing about them but they are probably more hardcore than hesh. Uh. Yeah...Awkward end to an awkward review. (LG)
(Don Giovanni, PO BOX 15482, Boston, MA 02215)

DICKS – "Pigs Run Wild / Hate the Police"

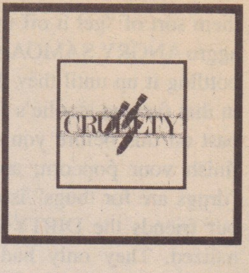
When we are all dead and in our graves, someone somewhere will drop the needle on the DICKS "Hate the Police" for the first time or the hundredth time and feel what I feel right now—the transcendent, otherworldly sensation of listening to something so great, so larger-than-life that it manages to blot out all of the cold cruelness of this fucked up world, or maybe magnify it only to destroy it, if only for a moment. There is no god so the opening chords to "Hate the Police" might very well be the meaning of life. Back to earth: this is a two song single, legitimately released with Gary Floyd artwork (kind of poorly reproduced, sadly) of outtakes from the *Hate the Police* sessions of 1980. Side A ("Pigs Run Wild") is a song later re-recorded for *Kill From the Heart* LP, rendered here a bit more slowly and dramatically than the LP version. Gary sounds completely amazing, of course. The B-side is the Greatest Song of All Time, and sounds pretty close to the version they chose to release on that original EP. Because that record is a valuable rarity these days, this single is the only legitimate way to own this song on vinyl for most of us. What can I say? If you don't want this record you are probably a closet homophobe, an unrepentant poser, or just need to have your head (or heart) examined. (GN)
(Delta Pop Music, 663 S. Bernardo Ave. #113, Sunnydale, CA 94087, www.deltapop.com)

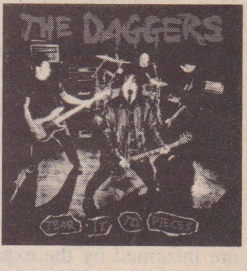
THE DICKS – "Ten Inches" 10"

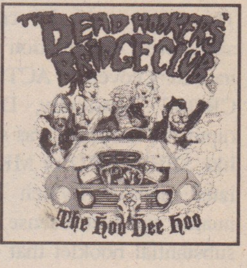
Six song EP recorded in 1980 at what must have been one of the DICKS' earliest live shows. The band opens with "Kill From the Heart," a punk anthem if there ever was one. While not as tight as on their split live LP with the BIG BOYS, the DICKS are no less vicious here, with Gary Floyd spitting bile-soaked lyrics over loose, trashed-out bluesy punk and taunting the audience in between songs. The best track on here, I think, is "Bookstore"—"Another Saturday night out in the bookstore / It looks like every fuckin' piece of trash in town blew in." It's hard to imagine now, in liberal San Francisco in 2006, how out there the DICKS must have been in Texas in 1980. So much more extreme than the pathetic antics of someone like G.G. ALLIN. Anyway, I wouldn't suggest this record as an introduction to the DICKS (check out the *1980-1986* CD on Alternative Tentacles), but otherwise it's essential listening for any folks who might think they're punk. (CS)
(Delta Pop Music, 663 S. Bernardo Ave. #113, Sunnydale, CA 94087, www.deltapop.com)

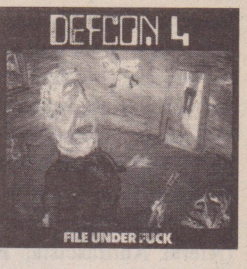
DIRTY NEEDLES – "Justine's A Junkie" EP

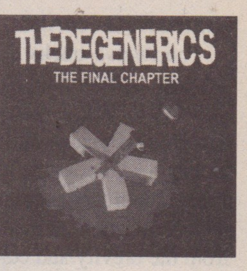
I'm really glad that they are letting prisoners do more than just rot in front of the TV in stir; here's a worthy project to keep them involved in their lives. The DIRTY NEEDLES have a lot of negativity inside them, so its best to let

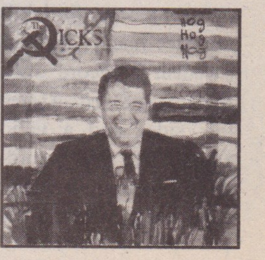





THE DEAD HOOKERS' BRIDGE CLUB
The Hod Dee Hoo







them sort of "get it off their chests" in a hyper-aggro ANGRY SAMOANS style rather than just bottling it up until they throw their hot oatmeal in that *fucking* stoolie's face. Three songs blaze past on this before you even have a chance to finish your popcorn, and the old truism that "drugs are for thugs" is definitely a lesson that our friends the DIRTY NEEDLES have internalized. They only had enough cigarettes to trade to press 300 of these, so move fast or you'll be getting some tears etched next to your eyes *rapido*. (RW)

(Certified PR, www.certifiedprrecords.com)

DIR YASSIN – "Discography" LP

DIR YASSIN was/is a group whose significance stretches far beyond their recorded music. A band with lyrics harshly critical of the Israeli state that was actually *from* Israel, their politics are informed by the experience of living every day in a situation of which most of us in the West and elsewhere only catch brief glimpses. This 46-song (!) LP collects their three EPs along with compilation and unreleased tracks, including covers of ACTION PACT and WHITE CROSS. Musically, DIR YASSIN's dense, rapid-fire hardcore was similar in style to bands like SEEIN RED or MK ULTRA, though their later material (which I prefer) shows more nuance and even a sense of melody at times. The substantial booklet that comes with the record includes all their lyrics in Hebrew, English translations and explanations, and some incredibly interesting and thought-provoking liner notes that reflect on the band members' lives in Israel, the political situation there and its relation to the rest of the world, and the importance of a radical DIY punk community in Israel to its participants. This release is truly the "full package," an inspiring example of the potential of hardcore punk. Highest possible recommendation. (CS)

(Alerta Antifascista, PO Box 2318, 24913 Flensburg, GERMANY, www.no-pasaran.org)

DISKONTO / MASSGRAV – split LP

The twelve tracks on the MASSGRAV side are ace nonstop, high-speed ultra-thrash that, like KRIGSHOT, lift unmistakable Swedish hardcore influences and guitar riffs as they unrelentingly explode one after the next. Lyrics are shouted in hyper vocal tradeoffs in Swedish and the printed lyric explanations in English suffer from the brevity and curtness that is the music's asset—direct and punk—but some are more complex than black-and-white issues detailed in two sentences. Still killer! DISKONTO keeps the pace manic, speeding on a more traditional Swedish hardcore attack with intense vocals screaming Swedish (great lyrics explanations on this side) and a vicious, inventive musical attack. The thin recording and, at times, near upbeat feeling of music that surfaces melody is almost more akin to what you'd expect from a SXE or hardcore revival record, but it works. Bruuttttalllll. (KS)

(Sound Pollution, PO Box 17742, Covington, KY 41017, www.sound-pollution.com)

LA DISPUTE – "Vancouver" CD

With little information on the CD, I'd guess San Diego, 1998 with FISHWIFE/JEHU-style influences and the kind of more technical and tough edge of a band like IMPEL. It's actually a modern band from Grand Rapids, Michigan who proficiently and expertly deliver seven tracks of "post-hardcore" with flowing jazz-parts-to-rock-parts-to-quiet-melodic-parts-to-explosive-hardcore-parts with a kind of nu-hardcore intensity—but reading more emo than SYSTEM OF A DOWN. Add on impassioned and overly emotional '90s vocals (a la RITES OF SPRING or, more to the point, their hundreds of shockingly embarrassing imitators) and this just becomes impossible to listen to, like a stark reminder of the whole era of experimentation in the 1990s that everyone would like to forget where music reached for a more "emotional" core, hugs were free, and it all fell flat on its face within the confines its own limitations. Ick! (KS)

(Friction, www.frictionrecords.net)

LOS DOLARES – "Las Venus Abiertas de America Latina" LP

Generic if heartfelt Spanish anarcho-hardcore with two vocalists, a distractingly thin guitar sound, way too many unexpected tempo changes, some "moody" arpeggiated bits, and even the occasional FROM ASHES RISE-styled guitar solo. Basically, this band features almost every generic cliché of late-'90s anarcho-HC with a few clichés lifted from the modern school of crust. Not exactly bad, per se, but the weak recording and heard-them-a-million-times riffs don't do LOS DOLARES any favors in trying to convince me I'm going to want to listen to this once I walk out of this review room. Naturally, the LP comes with a thick booklet of lyrics, explanations (in Spanish with English translations), and art featuring skulls with overwrought references to multi-national corporations and their evil nature. (GN)

(Alerta Antifascista, Postbox 2318, 24913 Flensburg, GERMANY, www.no-parasan.org)

DRINK, FIGHT, THUGS – "Fuck You…This Is War" CD

Horrible, horrible, horrible one-dimensional Oi tinged street-punk. This bored the fuck out of me. I knew we were in trouble when I clocked the guy with a mohawk and a beard…yikes. (TB)

(no address)

THE ENDLESS BLOCKADE – "Come Friendly Bombs" EP

Meaty, abrasive thrash fits mixed between blown-out thudding dirge, like a smooshing of recent screechingly-vocalled DROPDEAD tracks with the darker, heavier, rocking moments of DEVOID OF FAITH. On the eleven tracks here, this Toronto band swaps speed and assault frequently for devastating effect. Lyrics are scrawled in Ralph Steadman-style scratch and drip, and attack any and all permutations of scene lameness as well as political topics. Fold-out sleeve, cool splattered vinyl. (KS)

(Dada Drumming, PO Box 101445, Fort Worth, TX 76185, www.dadadrumming.org)

THE ENDLESS BLOCKADE – "Come Friendly Bombs" EP

Often pigeonholed as power violence, the ENDLESS BLOCKADE is more diverse than that. They play a mixture of speedy power violence mixed with raw hardcore, slow sludge sounds, and blasts. Recorded in 2004—I think right before the LP—with a different drummer. Damn, I love this. I love the speed changes, the scratchy vocals you can almost understand, and the blistering fast blasts mixed with slow sections. And that there are eleven tracks on the red splattered clear vinyl. (MH)

($4.50 ppd: Dada Drumming, Po Box 101445 Fort Worth, Texas 76185-1445, www.dadadrumming.org)

ENVIRONMENTAL YOUTH CRUNCH– "And Other Tidbits With Bill Hamilton" CD

Environmental Youth Crunch play Plan-It-X style folk punk music that seems to be popular with the kids. The music is stripped down and the lyrics are anti-state while being optimistic at the same time. The first problem I have with this is that it is more folk than punk and I really hate folk music. The second problem I have with this is the songs are just plain bad. Seriously, this whole riot-folk, punk folk music is one of the worst things to happen in the last few years, but ENVIRONMENTAL YOUTH CRUNCH is even worse than the normal lack of quality control that fills this genre. Not recommended, unless you want to put another discarded CD into a landfill. (JF)

(Grateful)

EPSILONS – CD

Fuck these guys are sorry boys, they look no more than ten, or maybe ten and a half, probably with some make up fourteen but that's it. But this is rock 'n' roll kid, and age don't mean one single flying fuck. Have I just contradicted myself? Who cares, all I care about is that I found, sorry, been allocated my new favorite band. These OC mop tops hammer out some of the most righteous primitive thuds that I've shaken and shivered to in years. Erie organ, new wave handclaps, spazzed out retro guitar licks rounded off with squeaky out of tune vocals. Think of the BLACK LIPS with less hair on their balls, the REATARDS if the REATARDS lived with their soccer mums and had curfew, or DEVO if they recorded their material in a garage with 100-buck guitars. Come to my town, I'll sneak you all the freakin' underage booze your underdeveloped and very venerable livers can handle. Brilliant. (SD)

(Retard Disco, PO Box 461163, Los Angeles, CA 90046, www.retarddisco.com)

THE ERGS – "Jersey's Best Prancers" CD

A seven-song blast of buzz saw power pop from these New Jersey folk. Great stuff as was their LP. From the same camp as THE UNLOVABLES, this band has shot straight to the top of the pop circles. Somewhere in between ALL/DESCENDENTS and ARMCHAIR MARTIAN. (RL)

(Don Giovanni, www.dorkrockcorkrod.com)

FIGHTING SHIT – "Tuned For Thrash" 7"

Bringing the head bang, the mosh, and the finger point, and coming fairly correct with all three all the way from Iceland of all places. I think anyway. There's no real contact for the band really but on their website a lot of their shows are in Reykjavik. I realize everyone is on the internet now but you have to give me more than an email address and/or a website. I realize I'm guilty of doing this myself but this isn't about me! This is about FIGHTING SHIT and their 7" on What We Do Is Secret Records. Which is an excellent Germs themed record label name. The long and short of what you're getting from this is nine songs of politically minded but not preachy thrash—and that ain't a bad thing. (ST)

(What We Do Is Secret, 14 Magdelan Close, West Byfleet, Surrey, KT14 7SS, UNITED KINGDOM, www.whatwedoissecret.co.uk)

FLATLINERS – "Let It Go" EP

This is the final release from this Texas "street punk" band. To my ears, the three songs on this 7" sound much more in the vein of modern youth crew stuff—high production values, melodic guitar lines, gang-vocal choruses with lines like, "We had to stand, side by side," etc. I can't help but think of IGNITE with a gruffer vocalist and a bit of a UK punk influence. Tight and energetic, though not very raw or interesting. (CS)

(Slab-O-Wax, PO Box 461082, San Antonio, TX 78246, www.slab-o-wax.com)

FRAME / LEMURIA– split 7"

Frame sent me a demo tape a long time ago and from what I could make out I really liked what I heard. An echo from the mid '90s style emo back when emo wasn't just indie rock with cry baby tendencies and power pop hooks, Well I don't know if it was the recording or the tape itself but it sounded like I was listening to it from the other room with my ear pressed to the wall so I didn't spend too much time with it after the first few listens. That was about two years ago now and FRAME is still riding around on the same horse, though gallivanting around a better recording studio. Like the aforementioned mid '90s emo, FRAME can let loose with some pretty monotonous openers. I actually thought the first song was on the wrong speed until the vocals started over half way through the song. Two listenings and I'm still not down. Their second and final song turns back in the right direction though. Now, I never owned any THAT DOG records and I only vaguely remember what I heard…but I believe LEMURIA likes them quite a bit and could tell you a little about them. Dual-vocal female fronted pop-punk informed rock'n'roll. This is treacherous ground to tread. It's easy to step in to something you really don't want to but LEMURIA interrogated a German paratrooper and determined where the mines are and thankfully aren't leading us astray. They fill out their side of this 7" very nicely and I think a purple heart and full-length record are very deserving. (ST)

(Art of the Underground www.artoftheunderground.com)

FUCK ON THE BEACH – "I Have Never Seen Myself" 10"

Here is yet another release from these Japanese thrash masters. This time around you get them on a 10" picture disc. Nothing has really changed from previous releases. They are still cranking out song after song of wildly distorted and manic thrash. And of course, what would a FUCK ON THE BEACH release be without them doing the song "Fuck On The Beach" for the thousandth time. Of course it isn't groundbreaking, but they already have a built in fanbase so who cares. (RC)

(RSR, c/o Sandro Gessner, Str. Des Friedens 45, 07819, Mittlepoellnitz, GERMANY)

GHETTO WAYS – Dirty Down EP

New York's GHETTO WAYS play it dirty—stinking dirty and stinking cheap. Primal rock with the licks, hooks, and those chanting tight pants choruses. Mixing BROWN with LIZZY, STONES with the OBLIVIANS and that dirge-y soaked rumble with back door swinging groove. Four tracks, each perfect, each a dance floor filler, each a friggen anthem, all brought together with a no-frills-no-spills hard rock attitude. (SD)

(Wicked, 933 Metropolitan Ave, #2L Brooklyn, NY 11211, www.wickedsinglesrecords.com)

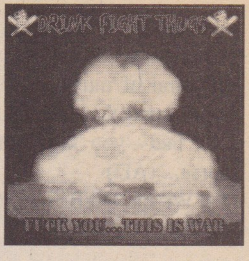
GOLDSTARS – "Purple Girlfriend" CD

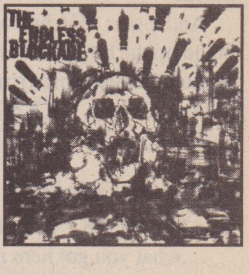
I know little of the GOLDSTARS, but I picture them lurching and swaying beneath blinking Hippie Lights, clad in extra-snug paisley and sweating like hogs. They're not wild, they're not mad, they're not out for the blood of the audience—the GOLDSTARS are goofs, their music is generic with a capital "ric," but (and it's an important "but") they're a funtime band who don't grate on nerves. That means a lot. Tunes like "DMV," "No Friend of Mine," "Fire," or "Angry Eyes" are driven by spook-e-riffic Hammond organ and slink along like jelly on legs—no, it's not raging with mad punk intensity *but* is possessed of a perverse soul. Some would hate 'em, others would pass them by on the street. Me, I think they're cool in a black-velvet-drug-poster kind of way. (JH)

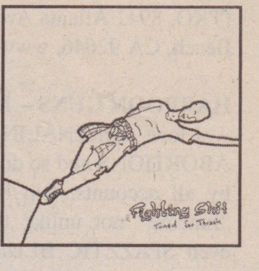
(Pravda, PO Box 268043, Chicago, IL 60626, www.pravdamusic.com)

GOOD RIDDANCE – "My Republic" CD

What's this? Like the eighth album...I could look it up, but I won't bother...I quite liked their first album when it came out, decent melodic political fast pop-punk, like a PROPAGANDHI your mum could get into. The singer







GHETTO WAYS
DIRTY DOWN

HEADS WILL ROLL

even has a CRASS tattoo! Floyd was even in one of their videos! It's just got so hard to listen to this kind of music after you've heard the millionth band that sounds like this. Actually, this isn't bad—you kids out there could do a lot worse... (AD)

(Fat Wreck, PO Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119)

GORGONIZED DORKS – "Destroying Your Stylus"

And I say: "Ha ha ha ha ha ha, ho ho ho ho ho ho ho, he he he he he he, ha ha ha ha bloooor-rrrruuuuuuuuuurrrrrrrrrrrr."(RW)

(Gothic Gospel, c/o K. Seki, 3115 Roberts Ave, Culver City, CA)

HANK III/ANTISEEN – "Ruby Get Back To The Hills/F.T.K." split EP

....what you got here is a big piece of dog shit pressed into a picture disc single.....!!!! Both sides are as boring as boring can get...........!!!!! HANK III tries to be funny with that trendy country punk sound but I suppose the magic works better on twelve year olds shopping at Hot Topic!!!! ANTiSEEN is also safe and commercial as far as I'm concerned.....even though they try to come off as heavies.....they're *sooooooo* dull that to me there's little difference between them and an act like WHITE ZOMBIE!!!!! But what do I know???? Millions of mall-rats can't be wrong.....can they???!!!!!!!!!!!!!! (SW)

(TKO, 8941 Atlanta Ave Suite 505, Huntington Beach, CA 92646, www.tkorecords.com)

HARPOON GUNS – 12"

I love ADRENALIN OD and the DAYGLO ABORTIONS and so do the HARPOON GUNS by all accounts. Rip roaring old school '80s "funcore" not unlike the aforementioned and even SPAZZTIC BLUR (remember them?). I dig this, though I'm not sure it will get repeated spins round the yard. Bet they are good live tho'. (TB)

(Square Wave)

HEADS WILL ROLL – "Paper Trail" CD EP

Four tracks of deranged, off–kilter, pounding screamo. BIG BLACK and KILLDOZER these dudes ain't. But I suspect they wish they were. It certainly all gels together, and I believe there's a percentage of the beards and backpack types that really groove on this kind of stuff. (RK)

(Friction, www.frictionrecords.net)

THEE HEADCOATS SECT – "Deerstalking Men" CD

I never owned this LP when it was originally released in the mid-90s, but a roommate of mine did—I used to play it when she wasn't home and *dream* of the day I could drop $10 on a Vinyl Japan import. The(e) HEADCOATS SECT were a supergroup of sorts, being comprised by the complete lineup of Billy Childish's garage-beat HEADCOATS and Don Craine and Keith Grant, onetime members of '60s beat/novelty band the DOWNLINERS SECT (follow me?). The not-so-younger generation meets the not-young-at-all generation and plows through a selection of HEADCOATS tunes ("My Dear Watson," "Fogbound Pinhead," "Lie Detector," etc.) and a couple SONICS standards ("Strychnine" and "The Witch") with superb results all 'round. The added guitars and forceful vocals from Don Craine elevated *Deerstalking Men* to the level of "special," "a rare treat" and "worth owning." Reason to celebrate for HEADCOATS fans and admirers of gutsy punk-beat-garage in general. (JH)

(Damaged Goods, PO Box 45854, London E11 1YXm www.damagedgoods.co.uk)

HIPSHAKES – "Ok Alright" EP

Does Slovenly put out shitty 45s? Ever? This is a perfect combination of BUZZCOCKS snotty desperation and some ghost band from one of those *Back from the Grave* comps. I only reference the BUZZCOCKS I guess because of the buzzsaw style of my number one summer jam, "In The Summer," which should be heard emanating from every sleazy beach go-er's portable record player at all times. Seriously, so awesome, it's a total punch in the face of a song. This a good reason why 7" records exist. I can imagine a kid stacking this up on his record player in like '65 or '79 or now; it's a totally timeless, effortless, just-for-kicks music. I don't mean that this record will change your life in anyway, because it will not—it's just a good time frenzy of a record. (LG)

(Slovenly, PO Box 204, Reno, NV 89504)

THE HOLY MOUNTAIN – "Enemies" 12" EP

All-out brutal, pounding, dark, metallic, bass-y, blown-out hardcore from Florida. Six long, well-crafted compositions, akin to modern bands like BORN DEAD ICONS or FROM ASHES RISE in rampaging delivery—but HOLY MOUNTAIN make their own framework of sound with complex arrangements, unique guitar parts, breakdowns, and quick tempo changes from mid-tempo charge to full blast-beats. Severe, wicked-sounding, and hoarse vocals slather dire and political lyrics. Succinct and boss! (KS)

(Alerta Antifacista, PO Box 2318, 24913 Flensburg, GERMANY, www.no-pasaran.org)

HOMBRINUS DUDES – "Politi-Kill" LP

Shit, here is another two-piece band creating a fucking mess of rocking noise. These guys who are from Michigan are going straight for that early NAPALM DEATH style, mixed with some elements of modern technical grindcore. You can expect some blistering beats mixed with screeched and growled vocals, but it doesn't really get past that. They also throw in a cover of SEPULTURA and INFEST. And it should be noted that I liked the cover art featuring the Grim Reaper in front of the White House, but their logo looks exactly like PHOBIA's logo. You guys need to change that up! (RC)

(Punks Before Profits, PO Box 1148, Grand Rapids, MI 49501, www.punksbeforeprofits.net)

INSIDERS – "Gran Lux" CD

These French cats are all over the place stylistically, dipping into space-surf riffs, megaphone-vox rawk, meditative WIRE-influenced punk ragas, GALLON DRUNK smoky decadence, you name it. The problem is they don't really nail any of these various themes down, its like they merely toy with them and then leave the project unfinished. I'm a ferocious believer in chopping up the pace on albums, its why hardcore and fast garage punk are usually failures on the full-length format, but these guys should pick out a style and pound it home on a 7"or two. Commit! (RW)

(202 Prod, 28 Rue de la Paix, 42000 Saint-Etienne, FRANCE)

THE INTELLIGENCE – "I'm Your Taxi" EP

Total trash, like '77 era the FALL vs ELECTRIC EELS or something. Not nearly as good as that sounds though. Yep, it's that trendy garage tinged art punk sound. Actually trendy is one of the worst words known to man, for real. Sorry dudes. I didn't much like the other stuff these guys put out, but this is OK. I like the B-side better than the A-side. It sounds like it was recorded in a dungeon. It's got something '90s Touch and Go Records about it that I can't put my finger on—it's that yowl-y howl vs. heavy Midwest thing. I am not enthused. It's alright; it's not as good as the HOSPITALS but maybe they exist in that kind of world? (LG)

(Holy Cobra Society, holycobrasociety.com)

INTERNAL AFFAIRS – "You're Dead" CD

It's no secret that I have soft spot for this Los Angeles straight edge band. Since their 2003 demo, Corey's singing style has changed somewhat on this full length, but his unabashed hatred and rage have not left. INTERNAL AFFAIRS has gone through some significant line up changes since then, including the valuable addition of Todd Jones (CARRY ON, BETRAYED, TERROR) on lead guitar. Like the their older material, this LP carries a strong hooligan vibe; with lyrics that hover mainly around familiar topics of brotherhood, pride, and loyalty screamed over fast, thrashy hardcore with the occasional huge breakdown. Now, I admit that this isn't the most original record that I've heard, and I definitely have to be in the right

mindset for this. But when the mood strikes, there is simply no other full length out there can satisfy the straight edge brute inside me. I challenge you to find a band that effectively melds an in-your-face, straight edge attitude with intensely fast hardcore like INTERNAL AFFAIRS. There are none. (CC)
(Malfunction, www.malfunctionrecords.com)

JOHN KASTNER – "Have You Seen Lucky? CD

The first solo effort from the former front man of THE DOUGHBOYS, ALL SYSTEMS GO, and the early line–up of the ASEXUALS. Being a huge DOUGHBOYS fans, I have followed everything done by Kastner. This album is a mix of pop, acoustic, and some rocking stuff. I enjoy the variety on this that compliments the up tempo guitar heavy stuff. This is no DOUGHBOYS but its also not 1992 either. A well crafted full length that rocks when it wants to. (RL)
(Boss Tuneage, www.bosstuneage.com)

KITTY AND THE KOWALSKIS – "Chinese Democracy!!!"

After years of waiting, I finally have *Chinese Democracy* in my hands! Wait, where's TOMMY STINSON? The latest from this gal fronted New York combo. Along the ways of a loose MUFFS or HISSYFITS. Although the vocals miss the occasional note, this is an energetic punky pop release with lots of charm. (RL)
(Amp, www.thekowalskis.com)

KLAXON – "Uonna Club" CD

Really solid mixture of the anthemic parts from the JAM and SHAM 69 songbooks with a solid dose of SLF from these Italian vets, but with more gutteral-snarly vocals. Normally this combination would call for a recreation of "that" scene from *Scanners* on my part but these guys *nailed* it on the production end, and everything works. The early tracks on here are from 1984, and with hardcore über alles in Italy at the time it must've been tuff to champion this melodic style. The really amazing part of this CD is the 2005 reunion tracks, which are usually the tracks you skip over but the vocalist's voice hasn't changed at all. Insane. Recommended for the punx. (RW)
(City of the Dead, CP 88 (Vt Centro), 01100 Viterbo, ITALY)

KONTEMPT – "The End" EP

I couldn't help but laugh when I looked at the insert for this record and noticed that the guitar player for KONTEMPT is named "Skabs." So crusty! Anyhoo, this Canadian band plays fast Scandi-thrash with a crazy blown-out recording, which sounds more like an actual lo-fi recording than the Japanese crasher crust tendency of having like, 48-track studio recordings of their blown out noize. I have to say, sometimes I really like the rawness of the recording and sometimes it is just a bit distracting. It definitely makes it sound punk as fuck though—I am tired of crusty music with metal production. At any rate, KONTEMPT keeps things fast and simple, and while a bit on the generic side they make up for it by doing a fairly ragin' ANTI-CIMEX impersonation. I dig it. (GN)
(The Total End, 25 St. Augustine St, West Hartford, CT 06110)

KOVER – "Assembly" CD

Not too dissimilar to A DEATH IN THE FAMILY reviewed earlier, these Canucks are dipping into HOT WATER MUSIC/LEATHERFACE territory but adding some *Wig Out At Denko's* era DAG NASTY pop, and even some SAMIAM. It's all a little earnest for me and at times, dare I say it, emo. When they keep it rocking I'm down. Sensitive hardcore kids take note. (TB)
(www.engineer.com)

LABOR DAY SAINTS – CD

Mid-'90s DROPKICK MURPHYS/RANCID Epitaph worship. I'm over this type of sound these days but a decade ago I probably would have loved this. If you have an extensive RANCID collection you'll love this. They butcher a Pogues song which is enough for me to hit the stop button. (TB)
(labordaysaints@yahoo.com)

LIGHT THE FUSE AND RUN – "Fire Sale" CD

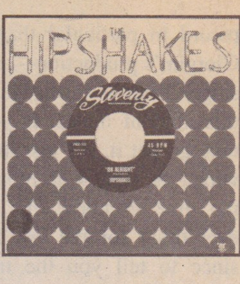
This is a collection of EP, demo, and unreleased tracks from this band that existed from 2000-2003. They seemed to have done a lot in those three years—a bunch of records and some Euro touring. I can't say I ever paid too much attention to this band (although I'm pretty sure I've reviewed them in these pages before) but the songs on here are of the heavy, post-FUGAZI hardcore genre, with dueling guitars and yelped vocals. At times they adopt a JESUS LIZARD/SCRATCH ACID tone. This is more than decent, and in fact I think I might be more charitably disposed towards this stuff now than I would have been at the time. I don't know if this is the best introduction to the band (seeing as it's kind of a rag-tag collection), but it's definitely worth checking out, and well nigh essential if you're already a fan. (AM)
(We Are The Label, PO Box 14838, Richmond, VA 23221, www.wearethelabel.com)

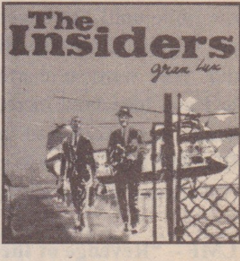
LIGHTHOUSE PROJECT – "Navigate by Heart" LP

If I could go back in time and keep REFUSED from happening, I would do it. Screamed, strained vocals and nautical themed titles like "Forward Now!" and "The Last Voyage" means these guys probably claim BLACK FLAG as a major musical influence. Modern hardcore for modern times. (CC)
(combatrockindustry.net)

LILLINGTONS – "Death By Television" CD

Hands down best record of 1999, maybe the whole '90s, re-released (and re-mastered) seven years later. It was originally on Panic Button/Lookout! and now it's on some label called Red Scare. The LILLINGTONS were three kids from Wyoming (one of whom may or may not have been a miner, although that could just be a punk rock urban myth...) who managed to get the majority of the punk scene wetting their collective pants from London to LA at the end of the last century. They played utterly infectious, catchy, upbeat punk rock that owed as much to comic books and old science fiction movies as to the Holy Grail of the RAMONES and of course SCREECHING WEASEL. They showed great originality for such a narrow musical sub-genre, but it was their amazing sound and energy that really set them apart—energy that comes right out of this





the intelligence

KLAXON - UONNA CLUB

2002 MEXICO!

record in particular thanks to the great Mass Giorgini's production—and in my opinion, their singer Kody's voice, which was just made for this kind of music. If you don't already have this, go get it, it's just hit after hit. This record wiped the floor with most of the stuff around at the time. Actually, it's wiped the floor with everything for the last fifteen years and ever since to tell you the truth. "Brain Damage" remains one of the greatest disaffected youth anthems ever made, and will continue to make me smile until I'm hopefully an old man. I feel privileged to have seen them the few times that I did. They were so charming, I don't think they had any idea how incredibly cool they were... These days Kody can be found in TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKET. Go check them out. (AD)
(Red Scare, www.redscare.net)

LMF – "Revenge of the Syringe" CD

Nine tracks of straight-ahead, straight-up, no frills, no fault basic US hardcore. Bare-knuckled and angry, with chunky breakdowns that are punctuated by gang choruses and tough vocals spouting lyrics that question how to live life and the kind of "What Happened?" scene questioning that seems to come with the "old" style. Totally solid, but filtered through modern EPITAPH-style recording values, as opposed to the retro-'80s rawness that would organically mask sluggish drumming and riffs in need of volume and thickening, and give the music more impact. The cover of BLACK FLAG's "American Waste" and the near pop tone it takes—opposed to brutal dirge—underlines this. Baffling cartoon cover drawing of a strung-out eagle. (KS)
(Worm Hole, 14111 Briar Place, Houston, TX 77077, www.wormholerecords.net)

MADAME GERMEN – "Invocacion À Morte" LP

Heavy Spanish emo hardcore on a German label. It sounds like melodic German metalcore. Mostly slow and melodic with big emo leanings, REMAINS OF THE DAY comes to mind. With the drawn out track intro/outros and longish songs they just couldn't hold my attention. The last song was too sappy emo for me. Sorry guys; I'm not feeling your pain. The tracks on side A do have their moments, as that side is heavier, faster, and the tracks have more changes, but bide B drags. (MH)
(Alerta Antifascista, Postfach 2318, 24913 Flensburg, GERMANY, www.no-pasaran.org)

MADIDO RESPIRO – "Hardcore" CD

This band did me the favor of naming their CD after the kind of music they play for ease in reviewing. Too bad the font is so blurry. At any rate, MADIDO RESPIRO plays decent modern style hardcore (modern like DS-13, not TERROR) with Italian language lyrics. You know the style—it's "old school" but doesn't actually sound particularly old. You know what? This is actually not bad. Maybe not a mailorder-this-sucker-right-away kind of thing, but definitely maybe an I'll-keep-an-eye-out-for-future-vinyl. (GN)
(Paolo Merenda, V De Gasperi, 39, 15100 Alessandria, ITALY, www.madidorespiro.it)

MANIFESTO JUKEBOX – "Strain" LP

You know that sound your car makes when it just won't turn over? Man, it seems like it's going to and then it just doesn't. You keep giving it gas and trying and trying until god damn it you flooded the engine. You pop the hood and everything looks fine. But what the hell do you know about cars? You're just a record reviewer. Well, I get the same feeling about this record. Every song seems like it's going grab me, and then it just doesn't. All the elements seem in place but it's still not working. Luckily I don't have to ride this LP to work or I'd be fucked. (ST)
(Combat Rock Industries, PO Box 65, 11101 Riihmaki FINLAND, www.combatrockindustry.net)

MASSMORD – "Inget Liv/Ingen Död" LP

Fast, dark, crusty hardcore with female/male trade-off vocals. Swedish hardcore crust I can never hear too much of, and this is pretty damn catchy. There are some punk moments, like on "Ett Liv Taget For Givet." There are anarchist leanings and lyrics that cover a diverse set of topics including: calling into question punks who aren't political, anti-Bush, a poem from an unknown author of an '80s anarchist zine, cops, etc. Think WOLFPACK. (MH)
(Halvfabrikat, c/o D. Lonnqvist Rimsmedsvagen, 36 C, S-393 52 Kalmar, SWEDEN, www.halvfabrikat.net)

DAN MELCHIOR – "Fire Breathing Clones On Cellular Phones" CD

I'd hate to be regarded as fickle, but DAN MELCHIOR just doesn't do it for me anymore. It really doesn't make sense. His songs have the same slightly old-fashioned garage-y style, sung with the same English drawl, yet it doesn't make me as happy as it used to. I guess Mr. Melchior and I will have to go our separate ways. I am sure there are others out there that will find this fresh and exciting. (CK)
(Plastic, PO Box 1385, New York, NY 10156, plasticrecords@hotmail.com)

THE METHODONES – "21st Century Power Pop Riot" CD

Dan Vapid and company crank out a disc of punk-i-fied new wave power pop classics. "Back Of My Hand", "Starry Eyes", "I'm The Man", "Out Of Luck" and even "He's A Whore" to name a few. All done with a little more muscle than the originals. Cool. (RL)
(Red Scare, www.redscare.net)

MILKY WAYS – "Shattered" CD

When it comes to garage punk, there are few folks I look to for a good time more than this Canadian clan, previously responsible for bands like LES SEXAREENOS, SPACESHITS, and DEL-GATORS. Furthermore, you would think the addition of the rabid Wisconsinite in charge of the EVOLUTIONS would be enough to kick this over into full-blown classic territory. Sadly, it's not so. This is all very limp and unfocused, perhaps with too many kingpins trying to foist their say into the mix too many times. They move from the moderately soulful numbers to the organ-driven stomps without pulling either off with real success. Fuck! I don't know what to tell ya. Maybe there really is no such thing as a sure thing. (MC)
(Alive, www.alivenergy.com)

MILLION DOLLAR MARXISTS – "Do You Wanna Evolve?"

This Canadian alternative rock band has been trotting this crappy "garage music" around North America for four years. This new EP has no balls, no ovaries—nothing! This shit certainly would not lure you away from a re-run of a hockey game from the seventies! The *Evolve* EP is wimpy, watered-down, wanna-be RADIO BIRDMAN/STOOGES bilge water! This is worse than the HELLICOPTERS or the BACKYARD BABIES, and those guys stink up the joint badly! *You must avoid this* EP! (BR)
(Seeing Eye, PO Box 88202, Vancouver, British Columbia, CANADA, www.seeingeyerecords.com)

MIND CONTROLS – "Prelude to a Fight" EP

Strumma-strumma-strumma, chanta-chanta-chanta, bop-bap bop-bap bop-bappity-bap. Another "garage" record that is about as KBD punk as you could possibly hope for, from the looping bass line to the sub-fidelity underwater fuzz guitar that sounds like you're standing outside the club listening in. This record manages to teeter right on the edge of tossoff, but there is something that pulls it back into the winner pile: overall style points. (RW)
(P.Trash, www.ptrashrecords.com)

MODERN MACHINES – "Take It, Somebody" CD

Apparently this is the fourth CD, though I've never heard 'em before. By the sounds of this, I've been missing out. They taken the rough melodies, and power–pop sensibilities of the late '70s Brit punk and new–wavers (the likes of which Stiff Records was championing/showcas-

ing) and mixed 'em up with the earliest offerings of the likes of the REPLACEMENTS and LEMONHEADS, and turned out a fairly eclectic, yet defined full length of scratchy anthems. Me likes very much. I suspect you will, probably, too...11 tracks, 33 minutes. Sounds just about right....(RK)
(Dirtnap, www.dirtnaprecs.com)

MONKEY ISLAND – "Feel Good For Nothing/Bobby No Bobby"

From London, a difficult one to neatly pigeon-hole here…it's got rockin' guitars and all but it's definitely not yer typical garage or retro '77 fare, it's more herky-jerky in a late '70s American new wave kinda way. Listening to the flipside I'm almost reminded of NOMEANSNO with its spoken word and bluesy riff. Good stuff. (AD)
(Falcone, no address)

MOUTH SEWN SHUT – "Pandemic = Solution" CD

12 tracks of ram-charging, two-fingers-in-the-air, speed-by-so-fast P-U-N-K from Boston, with the harshness of Northeast bands like DEFORMED CONSCIENCE. Tough, abrupt, no-nonsense hardcore, with barking vocals, proficient stop-on-a-dime delivery, and awesome political lyrics from members of TOXIC NARCOTIC. Great CD, though the occasional Reggae influence creeps in, with predictable, yet interesting results…and the title track owes LIFESBLOOD a percentage for the intro breakdown!!! (KS)
(Rodent Popsicle, PO Box 1143, Allston, MA 02134)

MULETRAIN – "The Worst Is Yet To Come" CD

After all the rotten CDs I got for review this issue the title of this CD totally made my heart sink. How could anything be worse than the shit I have already listened to? This is actually probably the best CD I got this month, but that's a total consolation prize. It's basically another record I would never listen to, but after a couple of hours of listening to wretchedness it didn't sound that bad. MULETRANE is a band from Madrid, Spain who is equally influenced by classic hardcore and rock 'n' roll, which seems like a very bland open ended reference point to make. It's a little too *rock* for me, but there are vague LEATHERFACE, MISFITS, and TURBO NEGRO touches here and there that make it listenable. I bet they are rad to see live if you are into this type of thing. (LG)
(Beat Generation, Apdo 18107/28080, Madrid, SPAIN)

NIX – "Speed Freaks" EP

One of my favorite bands of 2005 returns, finally, with a new record. *Hurray*! Pure lo-fi, trashed out punk rock in the most beautifully bratty and obnoxious way. Think SUPERCHARGER on uppers, listening to more of the GEARS than usual. Too bad you haven't bought one of these records yet 'cause I bet they're sold out by now. Ha ha. (CK)
(Know Crap, www.knowcrap.com)

NO TORSO – "Severed Brains" CD

I guess there is a certain comfort in the familiar. This is on Asian Man, so there's no shock that these dudes lay out a seamless blend of ska, reggae, punk, and rock. They sing in English, so is it a surprise that they're from Norway, not New York? I guess not. Rock music really is international, and English is the idiom of rock, right? They certainly do it well enough. And remind me a lot of the HIPPOS, before major labels destroyed them. Fans of the genre should take note. (RK)
(Asian Man, www.asianmanrecords.com)

OFF MY CHEST – "Duty Free" EP

Metallic tinged 'core from the Netherlands. Dipping into ENDSTAND/REFUSED riffage, but with more of a sXe attitude. Not bad at all if you dig on the Scandinavian late '90s post-metal/pre-emo hardcore like ABINHANDA and the like. (TB)
(Positive And Focused, Cicerostraat 5, 1715GE
Spanbroek, NETHERLANDS)

THE ONE AND ONLY TYPICALS– "Riot In My Head" CD

Also known as The O.A.O.T.s, this power pop trio cranks out the retro pop with mod–ish overtones. Note the JAM "All Mod Cons" cover. Strong songs with stripped down arrangements give this a mid '80s college guitar pop feel also. Another great full length from this LA combo. (RL)
(Sounds Like Vinyl, www.theoaots.com)

P.A.I.N – "Oh My God We're Doing It" CD

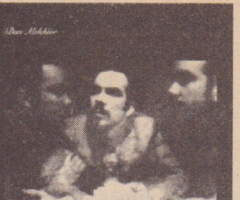
It's a punky reggae party, Ex members of A.O.S.3 and RDF play ska and dub with anarcho undertones. This is a reissue of their out of print LP from 1995. The punker songs are kind of reminiscent of the first Clash LP or old anarcho classix. They have a song called "Pork Dub." This seems like really trad-dad punk to me, it's not insincere or a pose, but I like my punk to be more adventurous. They thank the BUS STATION LOONIES in the liner notes, who have this song to the tune of "Kids In America" that goes, "We're the loonies in the bus station, woah-oh" etc, my friend Mavis used to sing that to me a lot. Anyway that personal anecdote has nothing to do with the music, but maybe puts them in context? Squat or rot punk from England? Slice of anarcho pie with your pint. (LG)
(Iron Man, www.ironmanrecords.co.uk)

PARALLAX – "Mediums and Messages" CD

Absolutely thunderous modern metallic-core from Provo, Utah(!). Full burl, heavy chunka-chunka dense-core a la CATHARSIS and DAMNATION AD, with contrasting chaotic and complex "musicians'" angularity and wide-open, sluggish depth—plunging in energized and complex arrangement. Harsh, scathing vocals, with detailed lyrics and thoughtful explanations of the political and personal nature. Sadly, the vocalist of this band passed away during the finishing of this album, but this CD is a fitting tribute of excellent music (and video!), expression, and ideas that I highly recommend to anyone into "modern" hardcore styles. (KS)
(Counterintelligence, PO Box 65215, Hampton, VA 23665,
www.counterhq.com)

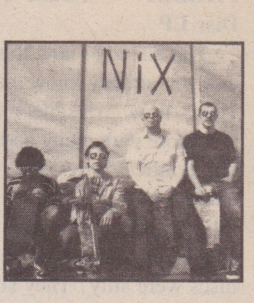
PERSUADERS – "Forced To Fuck – The Anthology" CD

As you might have gleaned from the title, this CD collects every release (plus bonus tracks) from these pioneers



MILLION DOLLAR MARXISTS
do you wanna EVOLVE?

PRELUDE TO A FIGHT
mind control



OFF MY CHEST

SKRUFEL
ANOTHER FOUR YEARS OF MURDER

of late-'90s New Orleans scuzz garage. 34 tracks of blown-out, in-the-red primitive rock 'n' roll, running the gamut from GG ALLIN-esque loser punk to CRAMPS-style punkabilly. Turn it up loud enough and you can feel the clammy swamp air closing in on you, even in the temperate climes of the *Maximum Rocknroll* complex. Why did I show up here without a nice cold six pack? If you like your music raw and uncomplicated, or if you just had a hard time tracking down the various EPs and comp tracks from this group, go to it. Oh, and apparently they reformed for this year's Chicago Blackout. I haven't heard any reviews yet… (AM)
(Shattered, www.shatteredrecords.net)

PHOBIA / SKRUPEL – split EP

SoCal's PHOBIA trade off between screeching in-the-red howls and throaty bellows over technical hyperactive grind-thrash. A five-song barrage of heavy intense grind with the snare drum set on full throttle, complemented by blunt, harsh lyrics. Germany's SKRUPEL continue the full-tilt snare-driven grind with eight tracks of a looser attack; scowling brutal vocals spit curt near-haiku lyrical harshness. Severe. (KS)
(RSR c/o Sandro Gessner, Strasse Des Friendens 45, 07819 Mittel Poellnitz, GERMANY)

PHOBIA – "Means of Existence" Picture Disc LP

You already know this California grind band and you already know this album (it came out in 1998) now available as a picture disc. Pure grindcore with many nods to NAPALM DEATH and political lyrics and, well, can there ever be enough of that? They've gotten better with their last two releases but this is still worth grabbing. Can I admit here that I've always thought picture discs were silly? They sound crappy, they don't last as long (ever see one peel?), and often the idea of artwork on the LP is wasted. I guess this LP has been out of print so it's nice to be able to get it in some form. (MH)
(Deep Six, PO Box 6911, Burbank, CA 91510, www.deepsixrecords.com)

PHOBIA – "Cruel" LP

Back in the '90s I was a huge PHOBIA fan. Their releases and live shows always blew me away, but over the years I haven't kept up with them. And yet, here are 21 blistering new songs just to show you that they haven't gone away. To be honest, the first track on this started of to be a rather rocking tune and got me a little worried. But then, the motherfucking hammer dropped and those blast beats kicked in and made me feel right at home. Hard to believe they are still one of the best grindcore bands around. Oh yeah, the LP is on Deep Six and the CD is on Willowtip, so make your choice. Fucking ferocious! (RC)
(Deep Six, www.deepsixrecords.com)

PHOENIX FOUNDATION – "Falling" LP

From Finland, the PHEONIX FOUNDATION come in somewhere between HOT WATER MUSIC and SNUFF, playing good mid-to-up-tempo solid melodic punk with a little emo thrown in, but don't let that put you off. Fellow Finns MANIFESTO JUKEBOX and WASTED would also work as reference points; I'm pretty sure that there's some of those guys in these guys too. There's a definite Bob Mould influence somewhere in there as well. Anyway—it's well written and well played and I like it. (AD)
(Combat Rock Industries, PO Box 65, 11101 Riikimaki, FINLAND)

PLASTIK EXPLOSIVES – "Songs Of The Doomed" CD

These clever spellers offer up the very familiar hard rock/punk dogshit found on a monthly basis in my CD bin. To their credit, they succeed where others fail by having a snotty singer instead of some gruff-sounding meathead to sing about titties and other poignant topics. Accentuate the positive. (MC)
(Threat, www.threat-records.com)

POSTCARDS OF THE HANGING – "Some Kind…." CD

Gee, I wonder if they named their band after the GRATEFUL DEAD album of the same name. I certainly fucking hope not! It doesn't matter anyway, because I still didn't really care for the band. This is modern sounding hardcore that reminded me of GIVE UP THE GHOST. Fast, upbeat hardcore with lots of tempo changes and a touch of screamo thrown in for good measure. Plus the harshly screamed vocals kind of reminded me of the singer from the REFUSED. But in the end it all came off as uninspiring and rather generic. (RC)
(Record Labelation, 1575 166th Ave., San Leandro, CA 94578)

RABIES – "Disease Core" EP

Total Los Angeles '81 style. Snotty teenage vocals, Ginn-esque guitar leads, melodic walking basslines—for real, these could be six missing tracks from WASTED YOUTH's *Reagan's In* sessions. I caught this band at Gilman several months back and was very impressed. Clearly RABIES draws their influences from bands who started before any of the members were actually born, but I think the result captures the wild spirit of the early LA scene well enough. A great EP worth checking out. (CS)
(Smokin Barrel, 6191 Santa Catalina, Garden Grove, CA 92845, southsidebrigade@hotmail.com)

JAY REATARD – "Hammer I Miss You" EP

Mr. Reatards' first legit solo outing comes across as a synthesis of all his previous work, but still ends up sounding new. The title track shows him going in a completely uncharted direction, as it's as close to pop as he's ever likely to get. It works too! The two tunes on the flip come off as re-interpretations of his REATARDS and LOST SOUNDS guises respectfully, featuring his familiar bite in a more melodic frame. We're a long ways away from "Get Real Stupid" here folks, but this definitely points toward Jay's hit parade continuing much further than even die-hards like myself gave him credit for. Fantastic! (MC)
(Goner, 2152 Young Ave, Memphis, TN 38104)

THE REMNANTS – "A Few Evenings with the Bastard" 10"

I don't know that I'd call this punk rock. It's kind of bluesy and rock and roll. Yeah. With female vocals. Uh-huh. It's R&B. That's it. (KK)
($8 ppd: New Art School, 12864, Biscayne Blvd., #201, Miami, FL 33181, www.newartschool.net)

RIDICULOUS TRIO – "No Fun" EP

What is really fucking ridiculous about this little 45 is that these versions of "No Fun" and "Down on the Street" actually sound better than any other STOOGES covers I've heard in the last few years. I'm shocked at how well the songs translate... Oh, I should mention that the RIDICULOUS TRIO consists of drums, trombone, and yes folks, a goddamn tuba! I've got a soft spot for stupid novelty records, but I can't see myself ever putting this on again unless I have to clear out a party at 5 am and ANDREW WK isn't doing the trick… then again I'm sure marching band renditions of STOOGES songs probably sound great when your totally coked up, flipping through the pages of *Vice* Magazine. Definitely a "do"—whatever that means! Hey, I gotta give 'em credit for picking songs that work—can imagine a tuba rendition of "Raped Ass"? (VH)
(Slovenly, PO Box 204, Reno, NV 89504)

THE RIPPERS – "You Can't Leave Me All Night Long/Got My Mojo Working

One original one cover, which seems to be the garage standard for the last million and one eons. Blues-y rock 'n' roll thumbed out in a frantic but not rushed pace, enough bleedin' finger tips, raw knuckles, and ripped raw vocals to keep these two retro ditties from slipping into that big, mundane garage vault. Recommended for lovers of the early MAKERS. (SD)
(Slovenly)

RUIN – "Distort/Confuse" EP

Devastatingly great world-class hardcore. Scotland's RUIN bombards with six tracks of classic UK thrash, bending the formula with inventive twists and maybe drawing more from early CHAOS UK than later. Still gruff, still blindly fast, with a d-beat set on full rampage,

occasionally cutting upon a sharp "punk" edge. To-the-point political lyrics with thoughtful explanations, Swedish translations, and a detailed explanation of current "anti-terror" legislation in the UK make this vital, relevant and crucial. (KS)
(Putrid Filth Conspiracy, Box 7092, 200 42 Malmö, SWEDEN, www.putridfilth.com)

RUIN YOU! – "We Put The Port Into Portsmouth" EP

Pretty good melodic hardcore a la GOOD RIDDANCE and KID DYNAMITE from the UK. A little noisy and a little passionate with easily understood lyrics, which is good since their ain't no lyric sheet. For those who care this band features Lloyd ex BLOCKO on bass. A fat guy in the band is always good. (JF)
(Rat Patrol, www.ratpatrolrecords.com)

SANCTUM – "Halt The Machines" EP

This is the second EP from this Seattle band. The take the early Earache style and give it a modern flair. It is obvious they are influenced by bands like BOLT THROWER, with their dingy riffs and throaty vocals. Simply put, it is a classic mix of crust and metal. There are three songs total, with one of them being a longer doomy track. I dug it and think that the crust/stench musical contingent will too. (RC)
(Putrid Filth Conspiracy, Box 7092, 200 42 Malmo, SWEDEN, www.putridfilth.com)

SCRUFFS – "Wanna' Meet The..........?" LP

....Metal Mike Saunders once defaced a SCRUFFS single right in front of me, accusing them of being "weak-ass RASPBERRIES wanna-be pieces of shit",....thirteen years go by and SCRUFFS records fetch a pretty penny cuz power pop is back in style!!!! You better believe it buddy!!! I myself, unlike Saunders, dig these lame motherfuckers....but it's true what he says about them having Eric Carmen's cock firmly lodged in their Memphis buttholes...then again Eric Carmen had Paul McCartney's British Banger firmly lodged in his Ohio honey-hole...and so on and so on......!!!!! This reissue *rocks*!!!!! I'm a little skeptical of the vinyl.....the record is heavy because 380 gram vinyl is hip at the moment but the grooves look like they're not pressed into that wax too deep......kinda like a shoddy Italian pressing!!!! Poor-mans RASPBERRIES from Memphis '77........check it out before the fad dies back down again!!! Suck on it sailor, you'll love it!!!!! (SW)
(Rev-Ola/Cherry Red, www.cherryred.co.uk)

SEXY – "Boma Ye!" CD

This is the latest album from SEXY, who unfortunately broke up in the middle of their most recent tour. If you're not familiar with their sound, they play raw, upbeat poppy punk, with the slightest, slightest hint of country. Don't be put off—they're not country in the slightest—there's just a slight twang to the sound and the chordage. Maybe like a punk version of later REPLACEMENTS? That is, not like early REPLACEMENTS, but not as slick and rock 'n' roll as later REPLACEMENTS. I'm sure there are better references but fuck that. Just get this and dig it. (AM)
(Plan-It-X South, 720 Pickens Ave, Pensacola, FL 32503, ashleysexy@hotmail.com)

SHAPE SHIFTER – "Religious Reich" EP

Ian. Ian are you listening? Your homework for this weekend is choruses and the art of wrapping it up when you've written so many lyrics for a two minute song that you can't actually say them all in the time allowed. I want you to come back Monday morning with five new ideas and a sing-along. Brian, I need you to come up with at least two breakdowns by the end of this semester. I see a lot of potential here. As it stands now though I've got a choice to make: to give you an incomplete or a D. (ST)
(Don Giovanni, www.dongiovannirecords.com)

SIOUX CITY PETE & THE BEGGARS – "Necro Blues" CD

According to the Steel Cage Records website, SIOUX CITY PETE & THE BEGGARS, "Channel the swampy heart of the blues and spawn a more intoxicating, blacker juju." Um, no. This is supposed to sound like the GUN CLUB meets the Delta blues, but honestly it comes nowhere near the honesty or intensity of either of those things. Sorry. (GN).
(Steel Cage, PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125)

SIXTOYS – "Forbidden War" CD

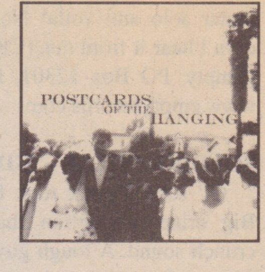
Yes, if one THRICE wasn't enough for the world, Belgium has shown that it too can turn out a generic melodic hardcore with scream vocals just as well as the United States. SIXTOYS must be bummed that Warped Tour doesn't go to Europe cause I am sure that SIXTOYS and those kids would get along great. (JF)
(Funtine, Vlasselaar 13, 3221 Nieuwrode Holsbeck, BELGIUM, www.funtimerecords.com)

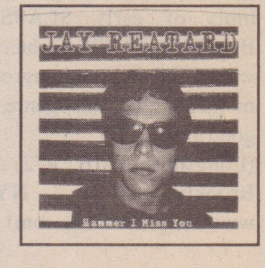
SMUT PEDDLERS – "That's Amore: Live At Di Piazza's" DVD

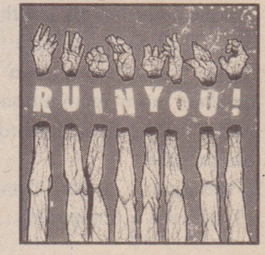
While a lot of their compadres have disappeared to the old smack house in the sky, these cats are still peddling (geddit?) their brand of SoCal beach punk. More ADOLESCENTS than STITCHES, they are pretty aggressive and tight as fuck live. I don't have a ton of time for DVDs of bands unless I *love* them, and while I can get behind the PEDDLERS I don't need to see an hour long DVD. That being said this is a great quality, four camera, sound board recording DVD, a great package for any fan (and it includes a bonus live DVD too). One thing this DVD does ensure is that I won't be going to see them live in SoCal anytime soon—the crowd they bring are *mental*, I wouldn't be surprised if this had been shot in some prison lockdown…yikes. (TB)
(TKO, 89451 Atlanta Ave #505, Huntington Beach, CA 92646)

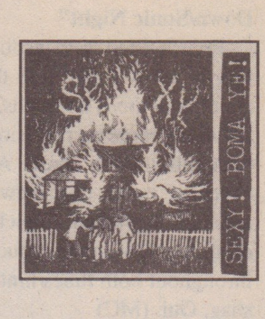
SNITCHES GET STITCHES – "Even A Butchered Carcass Can Shine" CD

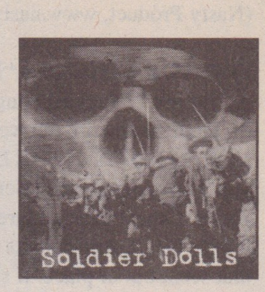
I know the old saying don't judge a book by its cover. But it has to be OK to judge a band by its name since theoretically they chose their name to say something about themselves. Right? Well, I hate this band's name. I also hate it when I see someone wearing one of those Stop Snitching T-shirts. Maybe I just hate the word snitch. The music is some of that modern metal-hardcore with the vocalist screeching with all his might. It starts fast, then goes slow, then goes fast again or vice versa. Throw in a











the Sonic Chicken 4

guitar solo and voila! Not my thing, but you didn't hear it from me. (CK)
(Empty, PO Box 12301, Portland, OR 97212, www.emptyrecords.com)

SOLDIER DOLLS – CD

Ol' school punk rock from the ol' country. Big crisp production that suits their heavy crunch sound. A tough guy feel without getting dragged into that macho realm that the windmill kids seem to be wanking over now days. Big hints of early SLAPSHOT, FEAR, and BONECRUSHER. Tighter than a badger's arse, with a liberal sprinkling of those fist in the air moments that this genre screams for. Damn good stuff. (SD)
(Longshot, PMB #72, 302 Bedford Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11211, www.longshotmusic.com)

SOLDIER DOLLS – "81' 2 85'" LP

Hell yes! Alex and Pure Punk Records from Parma, Italy has issued the complete works of SOLDIER DOLLS from the UK circa 1981 to 1985. These journeyman punks from the day deserve more recognition and a modicum of respect! Pure Punk Records will rectify this situation! (BR)
(Pure Punk, Casella Postale 214, 43100 Parma ITALY, www.purepunk.it)

SONIC CHICKEN 4 – "Don't Let Me Down/Sonic Night"

French-fried '60s-inspired garage punk courtesy of a few folks from the FATALS. In sharp contrast to those no-goods, the SONIC CHICKEN 4 rely more on precision and tightness rather than full-volume abuse. As loud and fuzzy as expected outta this crew, but the screaming abandon has taken a much-need vacation. Best of all, the few strange touches (xylophone?!?!?) throughout both tunes hint at brains beneath the shag. Oui. (MC)
(Nasty Product, www.nastyprod.com)

SPIT FOR ATHENA – "Piss Is Perfect" CD

There's 23 fucking songs on this thing. Some of them sound in the vein of ONION FLAVORED RINGS or THE ERGS or something—you know, jangly and scratchy but still really poppy. Others have a more DC vibe, like maybe 3 (the band), with bursts of blown-out grunge that seem out of place. It's all pretty good, some of it's even great, but over the course of the CD it all seems to blend together. If I put this CD on my iPod, and any one of these songs turned up on shuffle, I totally wouldn't skip it. So this really is a band for the modern music consumer. (AM)
(Friction, PO Box 6605, Grand Rapids, MI 49516, www.frictionrecords.net)

SSM – CD

So very, very Los Angeles. This is modern rock; not punk, not pop, not emo but modern sub-Top 40 rock. The production is slick without being annoying, and everything is perfectly placed on this record, the keyboards, guitar, syncopated drumming, the works. It's sort of an aggro version of that Central Valley indie band GRANDADDY, although that comparison would probably make them gag. Sorry. You're GRANDADDY without the mopery because you are channeling mid-'70s rock instead of singer-songwriter stuff. If that mid-'70s rock were MUD or ROXY MUSIC or GEORGE BRIGMAN or PERE UBU or something like that maybe I'd paint the banner for your next show in Silver Lake, but oh well. (RW)
(Alive, www.alivenergy.com)

STACK O'LEES – "Change My Plan" EP

A two-piece Montreal band featuring SKIP JENSEN who you may know from his one man band or the SCAT RAG BOOSTERS and DEMON'S CLAWS. Raw rock and roll with a big Southern influence a la THE OBLIVIANS. Even the name comes from some blues legends about sexual prowess and/or a magical hat. In my mind, no modern band can play this stuff as well as the OBLIVIANS, but it doesn't hurt to try. (CK)
(Big Black Hole, www.bigblackholerecords.dk)

STATE RUN – "Paralysis" 7"

It takes four songs for me to find anything to comment about on this record. If you were a radio man and needed to know where the single on this EP was…it's track four "Privatized." Other than that it might as well be white noise until then. Not in a grind sort of way. Just a boring sort of way. These are young kids from Wales though and this is their first non-demo take on pissed punk/hardcore with socio-political lyrics. There's potential I guess…it's just not being realized at the moment. (ST)
(Rat Patrol, www.ratpatrolrecs.com)

THE STITCHES – "8 x 12" CD

This is the CD version of THE STITCHES awesome first LP, which was previously available on vinyl only. This could have come out in 1978 and it still would have held up to the competition. Retro SoCal punk with bite! One can only hope a singles collection is also in the works. (RL)
(Vinyl Dog)

STRAIGHT TO YOUR BRAIN – "Before It Eats You" CD

Midwesterners spout out sixteen tracks of aggressive modern hardcore that occasionally pulls on elements of dirty, early '90s pop-punk. The lyrics are well thought-out and intelligent, going beyond the standard punk rock socio-political rhetoric. But the music...is lack-luster. The songs are solid and boys can play. They've got some good riffs, but it's just not exciting or dangerous enough. The vocals in particular are pretty unenergetic. I can tell they've got some passion. It's just not coming through in the songs. (VH)
(Froth, www.froth.com)

SUICIDE – "Ghost Riders" LP

The details: this is legendary NYC proto-punk, proto-electro, proto-*everything* band SUICIDE live at the Walker Art Center from 1981. They do all their hits; "96 Tears," "Rocket USA," and "Dream Baby Dream," with maximum cool in effect. If you have other live documents by these guys than this is preaching to the converted, but to you neophytes, you can start digging from this point and sink the deep shaft all the way back to the early '70s art-punk scene that we all owe a 5% tithe towards. This is either catch-up time or a pretty new bookend. (RW)
(ROIR, PO Box 501, Prince Street Stn, New York, NY 10012)

SUICIDE – "Attempted: Live At Max's Kansas City" 2xLP

Two LP's worth of keyboard driven minimalist brutality and crooning that prove synth-punk isn't always the gimmicky contradiction that bands like the EPOXIES and the FAINT make it out to be. Completely raw, primitive, and hypnotic; this first-time vinyl release documents a 1980 live performance by New York's most hated duo. The vocals are too high in the mix, but overall the sound quality ain't too shabby. Definitely not for virgin ears, but with a handful of unreleased songs and a gatefold sleeve it's hard for me to imagine that any of you SUICIDE fiends out there will be disappointed. (VH)
(Sympathy for the Record Industry, 4450 California Place #303, Long Beach, CA 90807)

THROBBIN URGES – LP

Trashy, distorted, messy rock 'n' roll, played at break-neck speed as though someone is after them and they need to finish the album pronto, then hit the road. I can hear bits of RADIO BIRDMAN and THE HUMPERS, but it is all mashed up into one big mess so I can't really say it sounds like either of them. Extra credit for adding an LP only track. Fuck CDs! (CK)
(Dead Beat, PO Box 283, Los Angeles, CA 90078, throbbinurges@yahoo.com)

TIME FLYS – "Reality is a Rock Band" EP

No one channels such a variety of non-lame '70s rockin' influences with more pure dexterity than these guys. They are more glam than a million Norwegian phonies, and way more punk than that retard rolling around in broken glass for the tenth time on the tour. See, the glass-roller can be medicated and neutralized but these guys write songs that are so good that they are gonna keep the sky from falling for another ten thousand years, and we should all be grateful that God sent them down here to mix with us.

Buy this or you'll be killed with the rest of the losers, while we "winners" are headed uptown with the pretty cocksucking angels when the Rapture comes. This is the soundtrack, so we'll have a head start when those trumpets blast. (RW)
(Birdman, no address, I'm *sure* you can find the damn website)

TOYS THAT KILL – "Shanked!" LP

A little bit more rock than *Control The Sun, Shanked!* nonetheless backs up my feeling that TOYS THAT KILL is one of the best bands going today. *Shanked*! is another wonderful piece of music that can be compared to OFF WITH THEIR HEADS, DILLINGER 4, or the THUMBS. Yup what we have is a Power Punk masterpiece. Worth owning on multiple formats and "Bomb Sniffing Dogs At My Door" is a candidate for song of the year. Great! (JF)
(Recess, PO Box 1666 San Pedro, CA 90733-1666)

TRANZMITORS – "Some Girls" EP

Fantastic power pop by this bunch of Canucks (and one old timer limey if I'm not mistaken). Totally authentic BUZZCOCKS/WASPS gear but with a little more bite. These cats could snuggle next to any of your late '70s favorites and no one would be any the wiser. Magic. (TB)
(Latida, www.latidarecords.com)

THE TRASHIES – "Let it Be Trashed" EP

Imagine a sort of lo-fi cross between the SIMPLETONES, the ADOLESCENTS and the B-52's, throw in some bizarrely dorky lyrics and you might have an idea what the TRASHIES are all about. Of course, it's probably not all that easy to imagine what that combination might sound like. With songs about peeling one off at the beach and stealing somebody's new bicycle, you've got to love these guys. Or at least I do. They only pressed 300, so you might have a tough time finding it. If you do go to the trouble, it'll be worth the effort. (KK)
(Out of Order, PO Box 72775, Davis, CA 95617)

TRISTESS – "Bara Rock 'n' Roll" EP

This band apparently started as a d-beat revival act, but they've done a U-turn on that and are now revivalists of a different stripe. This is totally authentic-sounding 1977 punk rock. It's really well done: the singer's rolled "R"s and breathless, strained delivery adds a sense of desperation to the tight, but not showy playing. However, this is *so* retro and evocative of a certain period, you have to wonder if it's worth buying this when you can hear pretty much the same thing by slapping on almost any *Killed by Death* LP? (It's not lost on me that you could level the same charge at probably 90% of the new records that come through this magazine…) I suppose the advantage is you can at least see this band live (opening for INTERNATIONAL NOISE CONSPIRACY no less), but still… When it comes down to it, something can be totally retro as long as it has that spark that makes it sound new and exciting—the difference between timeless and "of a time" I suppose—and I don't really think this has it. (AM)
(Kick 'n' Punch, PO Box 604, 2200 Copenhagen, DENMARK, www.kicknpunch.com)

TURNOMATICS – "Diablo Bueno" EP

Cryptic garage rock. Lots of haunting organ sounds and a high-pitched vocalist screeching along in some otherworldly way. It's hard to tell if you are playing the record at the wrong speed. It says 45 and when played at 45 it sounds better, but there is something strange about it. Of course, I mean that in the best possible way. They take some average surf sounds and twist them into something oddly different. Nice. (CK)
(Big Black Hole, www.bigblackholerecords.dk)

TYVEK – "Mary Ellen Claims / Honda"

This record is a bit like uncovering a secret. It's aesthetic is very late-'70s UK DIY in its childlike flimsiness—imagine drawings of owls and dinosaurs and off-kilter typewriter font all on ultra-thin paper, beckoning to those of us who long for things (punk records included) to be just a little less new-century flashy. The sounds on this two-song single are a bit more early Rough Trade/"Read About Seymour"-era SWELL MAPS than some of the more art school weirdness in that camp (i.e. DOOR + THE WINDOW, et al). In fact, the A-side reminds me of a more punk version of the BLUE ORCHIDS 7", which I mean as a very high compliment. Both with the old and new school of this kind of bedroom DIY, I think aesthetic tends to trump songwriting, but "Mary Ellen Claims" is a genuinely awesome song. The B-side is a bit more "arty" and a bit less great, but is still pretty cool. Overall this is a great record on a newish label that has put out three consecutive excellent punk records, this one being my favorite yet—I bet this scene won't stay too under the radar for long, but I am going to enjoy the secret while it lasts. (GN)
(X!, www.x-recordings.com)

WALKING BICYCLES – "Disconnected" CD

Well, if you've gotten tired of merely downloading the music you hear in Volkswagen and Apple commercials, you may want to branch out towards these tots if you're feeling adventurous. They've achieved a finely beige-tinted blending of various indie rock stylings of the last 15 years or so, pick 'em. I'm gonna personally add to this blend right now, hold on…hold on…fffffrrrrrppppt (plop). Gold. (RW)
(Highwheel, Chicago, IL)

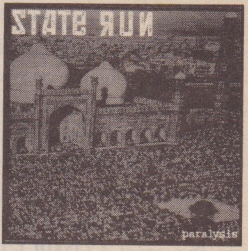
VICTIMS – "Divide and Conquer" CD

VICTIMS from Sweden hits a home run again with another kick-ass release on Havoc Records. This is 15 songs of blistering d-beat done in the way that only the Swedes can do it. Interestingly enough, the band incorporates some early US hardcore influences and a touch of straight rock 'n' roll into their sound. Plus, the combination of the thundering production and crushing vocals drives this to be one of the top releases of the year so far. One thing of note is the wacky neon/new wave artwork. Not sure what they were thinking here, but I actually like it. Apparently this release was sent out on CD first because the vinyl was not quite ready for their recent US tour (I missed them again). So if you prefer your release on a big shiny piece of black polyvinyl chloride then hold out till that hits the shelves. (RC)
(Havoc, PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408, www.havocrecords.com)

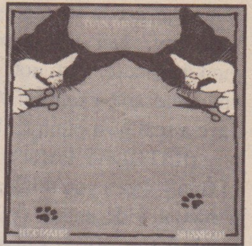
VITALITY – "Introspection" EP

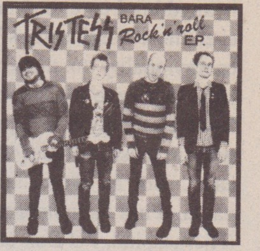
This Texas band plays solid, traditional hardcore with

STACK O'LEES



REALITY IS A ROCK BAND





VICTIMS
DIVIDE AND CONQUER

some hints of melody not unlike early JUSTICE LEAGUE or UNITY. Think mid-80s California with uber-positive lyrics that at times can come off a little oversimplified. The guitar leads on "Our Youth" and "Dark Days" are catchy as hell, while the breakdown to "Crucial Minds" had me singing along after the second spin. Good stuff. (CC)
(It's the Limit, www.itsthelimit.com)

WAR OF WORDS – "REVENGE" EP

A less sloganeering ANTI-FLAG is what I am hearing on this record. Now while I am sure most bands that are compared with ANTI-FLAG tend to cringe, I am talking more guitar sound and vocal styling than anything else. Lyrically WAR OF WORDS is more inward looking and not as cartoon-y as the band I compared them too. A decent record from the label that brought us the great COMPLETE CONTROL record. What is up with the promo punched 7" though? (JF)
(Slab-O-Wax, PO Box 461082, San Antonio, TX 78246)

YOUNG WASTENERS – "Waiting" EP

Internet message board dudes just all collectively died and went to heaven. You should get this before eBay does. YOUNG WASTENERS was from Denmark—I think maybe people from NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS and even HUL were in this band? They put out a truly great 12" a few years ago that now goes for $80+ on eBay that someone needs to repress already. It's classic sounding, just transcendent early LA style punk/hardcore, but not generic at all, totally anthemic and exciting. A couple of the songs have a real post punk feel to them, even veering into BIRTHDAY PARTY territory, which is kind of funny when you think about how all those LA hardcore kids ended up playing in goth punk bands in the '80s. It's like an inevitable timeline! I kind of like the more punk sounding songs better because the goth side of post punk isn't really anything I care too much about, but seriously even those "dark entries"-styled songs have this energy/quality to them. It's funny how every band can have the same influences but only a few are actually able to produce interesting, non-generic music without sounding like total replicants. Not as classic as the LP for sure, but damn, it has its moments. (LG)
(Hjernespind, PO Box 604, 2200 Copenhagen N, DENMARK, hjernespind@hotmail.com)

V/A – "Anti Disco League Vol 1" CD

A who's who of the current international Oi scene. For the most part this shit leaves me cold, but when it's good it's great and there's enough of that on here to make this a worthy purchase. The tracks by TEMPLARS, CRASHED OUT, APA, ON FILE, and one of my favorite bands DEADLINE are worth the less than stellar tracks by HAIRCUT, PISSED ON ARRIVAL, etc. Nothing strays too far from the formula, but there are some great rousing Oi numbers on here. Looking forward to *Vol 2.* (TB)
(Templecombe, PO Box 602 Bayside, NY 11706)

V/A – Euro Thrash Retribution" CD

Damn, I don't know where Max 625 finds the time or energy to be so tirelessly committed to worldwide DIY thrash and fastcore, but here is again, this time with a 48 band/song European thrash comp. The CD features some better-known ones (MIHOEN, SEE YOU IN HELL, KNIFED, etc.), as well as a bunch of more under-the-radar Euro thrashers (BURN ALL FLAGS, TEKKEN, CHOICE OF MY OWN, BIZARRE X, too many more to list) and a range of sounds from old-school thrash, to blazing fastcore, to youth crew, etc. The comp is *a lot* to digest in one sitting, but there is some cool stuff on here for sure. Think of it like a digital mix-tape from your friend Max to school you on all that is new and blazin' in Europe. The CD also comes with brief, thoughtful liner notes about geo-global politics and how they affect the punk scene: "As we challenge capitalist globalization we have to challenge ourselves to see how punk sometimes inadvertently follows these very same channels. " Word. (GN)
(625, www.625thrash.com)

V/A – "Havoc the First 15 Years" CD

A nice collection to remind us what a terrific and important label Havoc has been. Spanning fifteen years with thirty-eight tracks, this disc offers some of the finest European and American HC of recent years—REGULATIONS, AMDI PETERSEN'S ARME, TEAR IT UP, DEAD STOP, DS-13, and NINE SHOCKS TERROR alongside killer tracks from '80s greats like TAMPERE SS, KAAOS, and RIISTETYT plus a little taste of the '90s Minneapolis sound as CODE-13, DESTROY, and MISERY round it all out. It's tough to argue. (VH)
(Havoc, www.havocrex.com)

V/A – "Tete De BéBé" LP

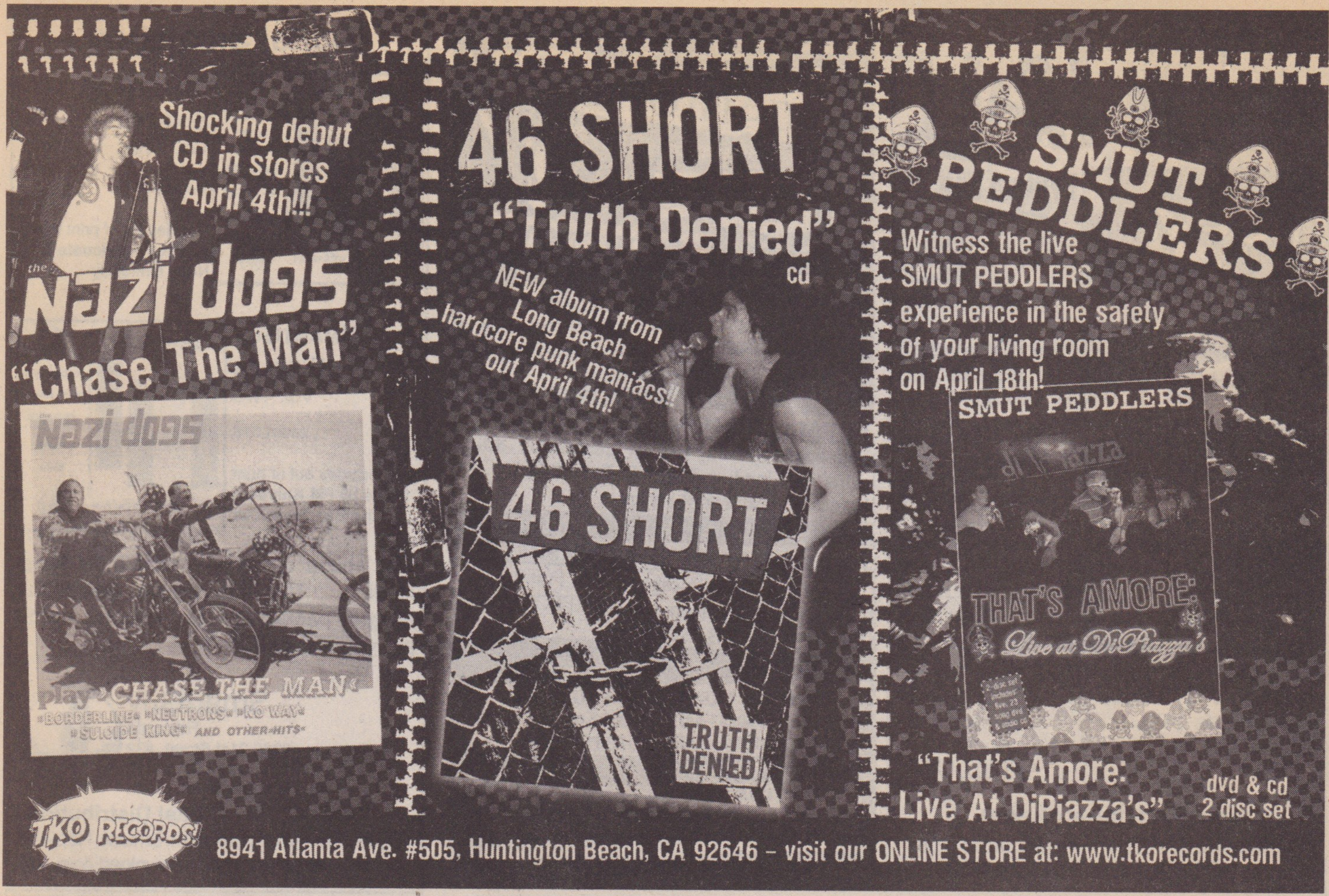
Boy, have vinyl-only punk comps come off the endangered species list yet? Here's a rare sighting, and relax, its plummage is in good shape considering its covered in petroluem products, the beak is sharp, the eyes are clear and its song is still loud. This comp is from the frommage/frottage-luvin' S-S Records, who haven't let their francophilia pollute the concept; this thing is full of Left Bank hooks from start to finish. There are two newer bands on here that command immediate exposure, that being CHEVEU and CRACK UND ULTRA ECZEMA. They have escaped the nets and are flying high over the refuge, far beyond the range of the hunters below. CHEVEU just rocks tilted at a very strange angle and that other group should simply be protected within the movie soundtrack business immediately. I could definitely hear them buzzing around in the background as the killer stalks his next victim, they are like the modern psycho-equivalent of the ANDROIDS OF MU. LILI Z and her "side" project VOLT are here as well, all electric hiss, hassling you in the parking lot for cigarettes, while bands (?) like LAWRENCE WASSER are reading aloud from the Zick Zack records catalog in a phony accent. This whole thing is disorienting, which is what punk used to be about back when we had a functioning EPA, dammit! And to top it off, there is a DRAGIBUS track for the kiddies, so help keep our environment clean so animals like this can continue to breed and thrive. (RW)
(S-S, 1114 21st St., Sacramento, CA 95814)

V/A – "They Came for Your Milk Money" CD

In the age of the disposable compilation, *They Came for Your Milk Money* truly delivers quality (and more importantly exclusive) tracks by some of today's great hardcore bands. The selling point of this compilation is the three songs by THE ALLIGATORS, who feature Roger Miret from AGNOSTIC FRONT and the dudes from INSTED. Like I mentioned in an earlier column, if the idea of Roger Miret screaming over *Victim in Pain*-era hardcore doesn't interest you, then you probably are reading the wrong magazine. THE ALLIGATORS aside, there are also great exclusive tracks by THE FIRST STEP (their first released songs since 2001's *Open Hearts And Clear Minds*), a cover of DAG NASTY's "One to Two" by INSTED, two great tracks (one being a BREAKDOWN cover) by KILL YOUR IDOLS, as well as contributions from NOTHING IN RETURN, ONE AGAINST ONE, BULLET TREATMENT, THE GEEKS, SHEA'S REBELLION, and TRUST. The real big surprise on here for me was SAY GOODBYE, who brings three cuts of raging, early '80s, traditional Boston hardcore. I need to go back and listen to their records again. (CC)
(New Music Revolution, www.newmusicrevolution.com)

V/A – "Summer Sounds: Four Reasons For The Season Vol. 1" CD

Four RAMONES/QUEERS/ SCREECHING WEASEL sounding bands on this compilation. THE BURBS, THE PROZACS, REGAL BEAGLE, and THE LEBOWSKIS do four tracks apiece. This is not the least bit original but fun stuff for sure. (RL)
(Cabana 1, www.cabana1records.com)



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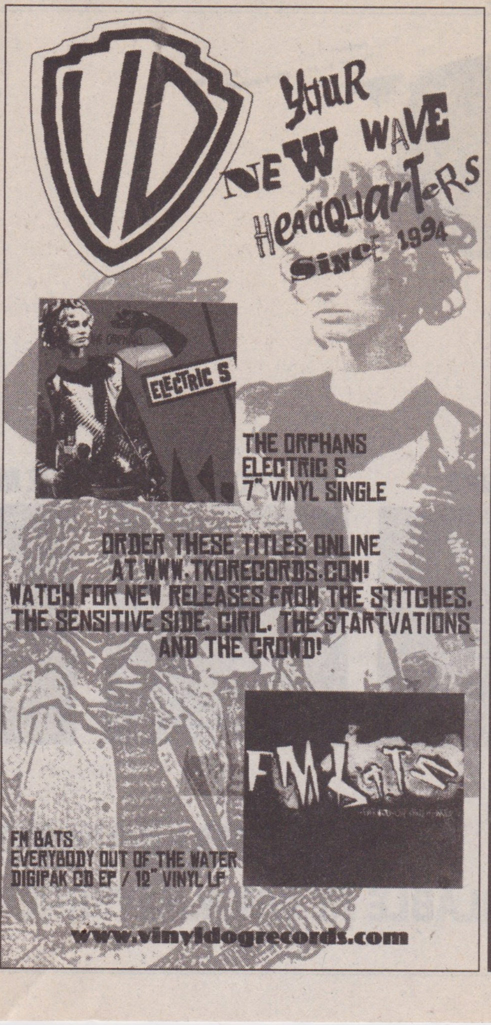

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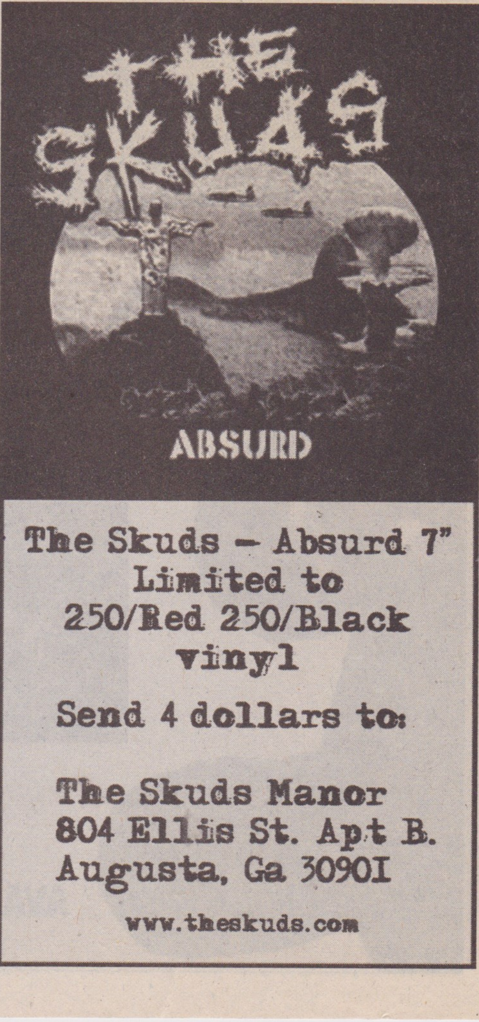

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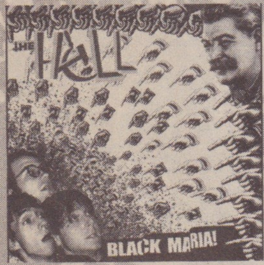
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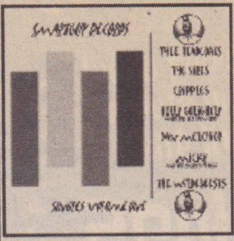
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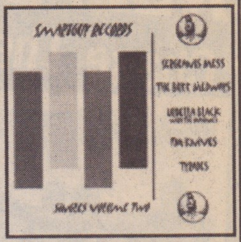
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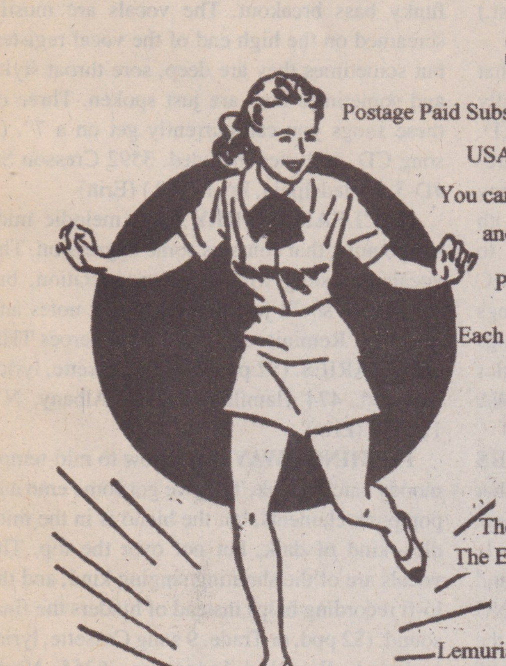

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DEMOS

Send demos and CD-Rs to: Erin Yanke, PO Box 1113, Portland, OR 97207. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Peter Avery, Golnar Nikpour, and Erin Yanke.

If Guy from FUGAZI were six years old, he would *totally* tell on the **CUDDLE MACHINES** for copying him. They play messy, up-tempo hardcore songs with jangly guitars and a vocalist that does Guy to a tee. The sloppiness of the songs actually adds to the energy of the band but the tendency toward picked out guitar parts and the lack of bass presence makes the songs sound a bit thin. (8 song CD, no lyrics, 801 Meeker Ave. #1, Brooklyn, NY 11222) (Pete/Katy)

DENNIS MOST AND THE INSTIGATORS play basic punk rock, with more emphasis on the rock than punk bands tend towards these days. They leave room for guitar solos and catchy riffs played at a moderate tempo, with a mix of spoken and sung vocals that are paced slowly but are totally snotty and full of attitude at the same time. They also cover songs by the PAGANS, the FLAMIN GROOVIES, and the STOOGES (10 song CD, no lyrics included. PO Box 380152, E. Hartford, CT 06138-0152.) (Erin)

FIRING SQUAD kicks out four, melodic, mid-tempo punk tunes. The sound is similar to BAD RELIGION with a touch of early FUGAZI/SOULSIDE era Dischord sound. They play basic three-chord stuff that has just enough hooks to keep the music interesting while it backs up sung vocals. It's a shame that the monotone singing style and flat recording suck the energy out of songs that otherwise are pretty good. (4 song CD, lyrics included, 1826 Potomac Avenue SE, Washington DC 20003, firingsquad@mutualaid.org) (Pete)

THE FUCK FARTS are gone, but live on through this discography cassette. DANIEL JOHNSTON on adderall—but also hardcore drum machine four-track insanity. The tape sounds like it's many generations old and the vocals were recorded underwater, which adds to the effect. ($2 ppd., but prefers trades. 33 song Cassette, lyrics included. PO Box 830, Chicago, IL 60690.) (Erin)

HANDS UP WHO LIKES ME sound full for a two-piece. They play fast punk that's not totally straight-forward, with vocals that are screamed from the back of the guy's throat. The drums and vocals dominate the recording, but the drums seem to provide the momentum, so it's alright! ($1 ppd. or 4 stamps. CD, no lyrics included. 7623 Meadow Ave, Stockton, CA 95207.) (Erin)

JAMES CONNER is of the MICHAEL FRANTI or CONSOLIDATED family where they have a bed of beats and political lyrics. It's not even real booty-shakin' dance beats, though. Pointy-headed soundtrack music is not exactly Maximum Rocknroll. (5 song CD, lyrics for one song. 1118 C Hutchins Court, San Francisco, CA 94130.) (Erin)

JUMP OFF A BUILDING is amazing! They have the angry genes of BLACK FLAG, keeping the full-on no-nonsense and skipping the guitar complexities, and also have the simplicity and pace of straight-forward early '80s hardcore that had no time to fuck around. They top it off with a singer who is as snotty as the guy from THE PANIC and pissed! Wow, a gem for sure. ($3 ppd. 5 song Cassette, lyrics included. 2558 46th Ave., San Francisco, CA 94116. But, they are moving soon, so you should email them at jumpoffabuilding@hotmail.com first.) (Erin)

MEDELICIOUS has this recording that was supposed to come out in 1993, but finally now has crawled out into the world on this CD. Not all of the songs on this demo are unreleased. Anyway, they sound like a really poppy rock band, at times almost College Rock, with some NIRVANA moments, and also bring to mind THE LEMONHEADS and SONIC YOUTH. These are three-minute rock songs with some guitar work breaking it up; the songs are very vocal-driven. (21 song CD, no lyrics included. 2901 Sunset Drive, Bellingham, WA 98225.) (Erin)

MR. SHEPERD & THE TEACHERS play mid-to-up-tempo rock and roll songs that are part punk and part '90s grunge. The deep, monotone vocals, sung in a gruff, slurred style makes him sound partially like Danzing and partially like the guy from the SCREAMING TREES. The music mixes the sounds of the grunge era of rock or something like the MEAT PUPPETS with BLACK FLAG style punk. It's pretty simple stuff, with a heavily overdriven, sluggish guitar that just trudges through the songs, basic drumming and a bass that isn't really anything special but tends to pull the songs through. The real problem is that the songs lack dynamics and quickly become tired. I'm also trying to figure out why they put porn pictures in their booklet. (20 song CD, no lyrics, 108 Kevins Ct., Smithsburg, MD 21783, pulserock@hotmail.com) (Pete)

MY WAR has another demo of energetic, hardcore songs. This one sounds much like their first demo except that the songs have more of a metal feel and aren't as driving this time around. The band has a heavy hardcore sound that mixes late '80s/early '90s New York hardcore and it's metal influence with crustcore. Heavy hitting drums and chugging guitars back up a deep, growling vocalist. These guys defiantly have it together with a tight sound and well recorded CD. (4 song CD, with lyrics, $5 ppd, 400 S. Cherry St. #3, Richmond, VA 23220, mywarrva@gmail.com) (Pete)

NO THANKS plays screaming hardcore that gives you occasional tempo changes, times to head bang, some fancy guitar work, and a funky bass breakout. The vocals are mostly screamed on the high end of the vocal register, but sometimes they are deep, sore-throat style, and sometimes they are just spoken. Three of these songs you can currently get on a 7". (5 song CD, no lyrics included. 3592 Cresson St. #D-3, Philadelphia, PA 19129.) (Erin)

NUCLEAR FAMILY plays melodic mid-tempo punk that contains some aggression. The vocals are sung with clear annunciation, but sometimes she'll just belt out a few notes and it's killer. Reminiscent of old local heroes THE OBITUARIES. ($2 ppd. 5 song Cassette, lyrics included. 474 Hamilton St. #2, Albany, NY 12203.) (Erin)

PUSHING AWAY plays slow to mid-tempo moody catchy punk. They've got some emo and pop punk elements, but the blend is in the middle—kind of dark, but not over the top. The vocals are of the shouting/singing kind, and the lo-fi recording helps instead of hinders the final sound. ($2 ppd. or Trade. 9 song Cassette, lyrics included. Woozley Industries, 6265 North Street, Halifax, NS B3L 1P4, Canada.) (Erin)

"Shielded by Death, Volume 4" is brought to us by Dagger Records. It's a great comp featuring US and UK bands from '78–'88. Some of my favorites are THE DETONATORS, BUTCH MINDS THE BABY, STICKMEN WITH RAYGUNS, and KGB. These bands, however, only scratch the surface of this comp's goodness. Thanks for putting it together! (26 song CD, no lyrics included. PO Box 380152, E. Hartford, CT 06138-0152.) (Erin)

SICK SICK SICK play the kind of punk that I remember seeing a lot of in the late '80s. Fast and mean, with a guitar solo or a double bass beat to mix up the song—but those elements aren't overriding factors in the music. The vocals are pissed and kind of spoken, kind of shouted, and the back-ups kick in here and there. This band sounds like a time before sub-sub-genres, and I like that a lot. ($4 ppd. 5 song CD, lyrics included. 423 Florida Ave. New Ellenton, SC 29809.) (Erin)

SKINNED ALIVE is a grindy, metallic hardcore band. They play pretty fast, but mix it up a bit with the pace. The lady vocals are tough as hell and kind of screechy, and the dude vocals are deep and also tough as hell. ($3 ppd. 5 song CD, no lyrics included. 574 Rosal Ave., Oakland, CA 94610.) (Erin)

THE SMASHCASTERS promo sheet claims that their "style encompasses genres such as street punk, mod-rock-n-roll" (their bad grammar, not mine). Well, maybe if you consider an even more pop punk influenced version of the first SWINGIN' UTTERS record to be street punk and an affected British accent to be mod rock-n-roll, then they're not so far off. Really they play pop punk that is actually pretty catchy with good hooks, well sung vocals, and gang style backing vocals (that's the street punk part). In total it is something like a mix of the SWINGIN' UTTERS and early GREEN DAY with some of those fun SCREECHING WEASLE lead parts. Despite my hatred for crummy promo sheets, this is a good demo. (6 song CD, no lyrics included, 167 Galaxie Farm Ln, Charlottesville, VA 22902, thesmashcasters@yahoo.com) (Pete)

Who thought arty peace punk still existed in 2006? Well it does, and **SURRENDER** is here to play it for you, and play it well. This East Bay four-piece calls to mind the best of the noisy and arty but still punk as fuck Crass Records bands—think HONEY BANE and you will be close. There are some really crazy guitar sounds on this tape, alongside spiteful female vocals, thoughtful political lyrics, and all around good songs. SURRENDER is for sure one of my new Bay Area faves. Hopefully, you US folx caught this band on their weeks long tour, which will have just ended by the time you read this review. A plus! (5 song cassette, lyrics included, PO Box 301, Berkeley, CA 94701, peacepunk@gmail.com) (Golnar)

WARGRAVE are a doomy yet triumphant crust band, with blazing fast straight-up hardcore parts and some almost catchy hard-rocking riffs. They have the details totally on for this sort of thing: metallic guitar stylings and hard, furious drumming, and the gruff vocalist from the 4th or 5th Ring of the Inferno. The sound on this demo is great; a well-balanced recording that is clear but not clean— always an impressive mix. (6 Swiss Francs, or 4 Euros, ppd. 10 Song Cassette, lyrics included. Giou Ballista Weigner, Spalenriug 139, 4055 Basel, Switzerland.) (Erin)

WARM SOCKS plays lo-fi pop punk that's romantic in theme and tone. The vocals are sung, and sometimes have a nasally tone. I bet they play with SNUGGLE all the time. Also, there is a killer field-recording moment, and this comes with a great map of Seattle—although how great a map can it be without helping you really find anything is something you'll have to ask yourself. (10 Song CD, lyrics included. 907 NW Edgewood Dr., Albany, OR 97321) (Erin)

The **YOUNG OFFENDERS** are a Bay Area four piece comprised of some fine young men, who play a timeless combination of '77 style punk rock and '78 styled post-punk—as you may guess with those influences, the songs on this tape are both exciting and insanely catchy. The best songs are the darker, more nervous and edgy ones, but there are some nice "ba ba-dum" parts and vocal harmonies in here too; this band definitely has a pop sensibility underneath their arty veneer. After seeing 'em a couple of times I can say that they are really good in person as well. This one is worth seeking out for sure, and I'm looking forward to hearing more. (Golnar) (6 song Cassette, no lyrics included. young_offenders_sc@yahoo.com)

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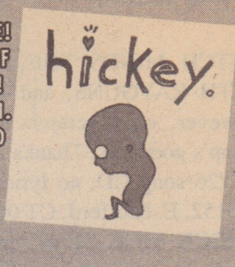

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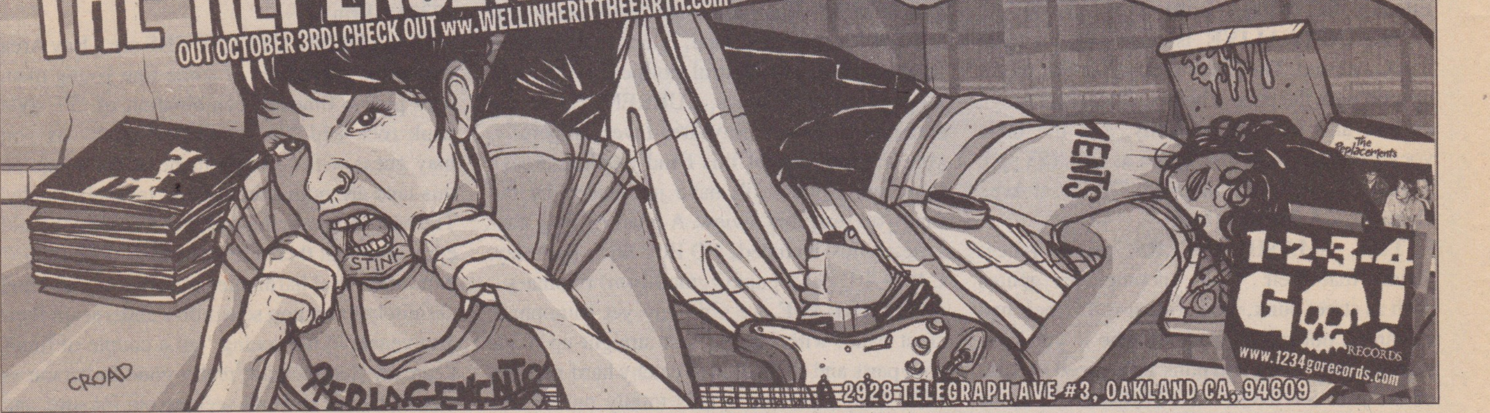

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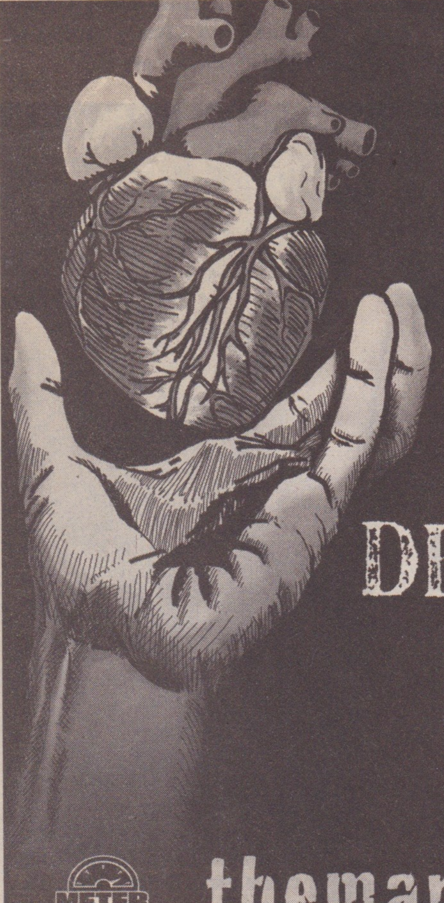
the martyr index

(Anarcho-Rock n Roll from Calgary, Canada)



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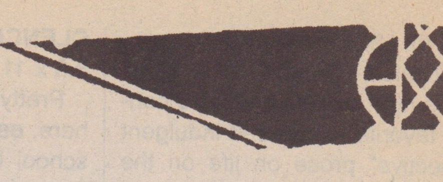


Reviews by: Aragorn (AR), Heather Blotto (HB), Paul Curran (PC), Mikel Delgado (MD), Layla Gibbon (LG), Chris Hubbard (CS), Harald Hartmann (HH), Nick Mangel (NM), Jeff Mason (JM), Golnar Nikpour (GN), Cooper Quintin (CQ), Casey Ress (CR), Andy Shoup (AS), Thera Webb (TW).

Send zines for review to: MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price, international price, do you take trades?, size, copied or printed?, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, email address.

ABSOLUTELY ZIPPO! #39 / $1 + 3 stamps or trade
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 24 pgs

Another fine issue of this long-running East Bay zine. This time again there is a blend of art and writing, including dozens of cool reproductions of other zines' old covers. Find also an extensive report on current and new Bay Area bands. Unfortunately (?) I failed the Punk Exit Exam at the end (I think) so hopefully I'll still be part of the scene by the time the next installment rolls around... (CS)
PO Box 4985 / Berkeley, CA 94704

A.D.D COMICS #2 $3
8.5 x 11 – printed – 20 pgs

So, somehow I got both of this douche's zines for review. It's like coal for Christmas. The exact opposite of a birthday pony. See *Charette's Eye View* for my, uh, opinion on the creative output of this lame-o. I seriously couldn't get past the first few pages of this particular masterwork. I always make a point of reading an entire zine before reviewing it, then if I don't like it I take it to MRR and put it in the free bin, but these suckers are going straight in the recycle. I have no idea how this dude even thought *MRR* would be a good place to send this moronic shit. It seems like he's one of those people who thinks they are "tellin it like it is," like Bill Hicks and Lenny Bruce combined. My feeling is that he's more like the creepy comic store guy from the Simpsons with some asshole 3 am talkshow radio host for extra repulsive flavor. Vile. (LG)
PO Box 9833 / Fall River, MA 02720

ALARM #4 / 2 stamps or trade
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 24 pgs

A good issue, with a theme: "exploring the roots of our politics." Except that there wasn't very much exploring, it was basically a list of cool radical places in Houston like libraries, the Anarchist Black Cross, the ARA, etc. Also articles on the Southern Girls Convention, the EZLN and Palestine. A good read, but probably only useful for people who live in Houston. (TW)
The Alarm / PO Box 66362 / Houston, TX 77266

ANARCHY: A JOURNAL OF DESIRE ARMED #61 / $4.95
8.5 x 11 – printed – 76 pgs

This content-heavy periodical is well put-together and recommended for anyone with an interest in anarchy in theory and practice. Along with the usual columns and recent events pieces, issue #61 features a dozen book reviews and four more in-depth essays. The most interesting to me was excerpts from an interview with primitivist and convicted "Unabomber" Ted Kaczynski, where at one point he criticizes the green anarchist movement and compares it to early Christianity. Wow. (CS)
PO Box 3448 / Berkeley, CA 94703
www.anarchymag.org

BIG EASY, SMALL WINDOW #1 / $?
5.5 x 4.5 – copied – 52 pgs

Even with half a continent between New Orleans and San Francisco, the horror of the hurricanes last year was impossible to ignore. *Big Easy, Small Window* is an exhaustive compilation of articles, newswire reports, and blogs that captures the situation following the disaster in a manner not seen on cable TV. The failures of the response and preparation to the disaster are laid out in a riveting indictement. The zine also contains an appendix with the story of the response to the flood of 1927 and the parallels to the 2005 floods, especially in relation to the treatment of those seen as disposable. Thoroughly researched and written with great passion, this zine is a great project. (CR)
One Thousand Emotions / PO Box 63333 / St. Louis, MO 63163

Absolutely
ZiPPO!
RUN FOR ALL!!
THIS IS NOT ABOUT YOUR FAVORITE BAND
Basically DONUTS
in the corner

BIG HANDS #2 / $.50 or trade
4.25 x 5.5 – copied – 36 pgs

The price is right on this one. The content, not my favorite thing—self indulgent and "introspective" prose on life on the road, in what I'm guessing is an emo band. Angsty, basically the zine equivalent of Bon Jovi's "Wanted Dead or Alive." If you dig the travel/touring band zine genre, you will like this. (MD)

Aaron / 1104 Imperial Rd / Cary, NC 27511

BROKEN PENCIL #31 / $5.95
8.5 x 11 – printed – 76 pgs

I think that Canadians need to seriously make some efforts to counter the stereotype that they are dull. I'm not suggesting that they make wacky obnoxious music and art just for the fuck of it, but dude! *Broken Pencil* is just not helping one bit. It's not *bad*, but it's not particularly good, either, just sort of like *the Utne Reader* for a slightly younger, more indie set. I mean it's progressive and well written, and all but it's just…it's not even vanilla, it's actually *grey.* Avoid at all costs (unless you are a square). (AS)

Broken Pencil / PO Box 203, Stn P, Toronto, ON, M5S 2S7 Canada
www.brokenpencil.com

CHARETTE'S EYE VIEW #1 $3
8.5 x 11 – printed 20 pgs

This is probably the worst zine I have ever had to review. Every single page features a circle c copyright symbol, „Charette to be exact. As if anyone is going to rip off this dudes shitty *Reader's Digest*/Truck stop style "humor." But by all means send off for this if you can get into ill informed political commentary that reads like being barraged by an overwrought, drunk, angry dude at an airport bar. And the unintentionally deformed cartoons veer from mildly disturbing basement geek shit to stupid dentist waiting room magazine caricatures. I am not sure if I am able to put into words how ridiculous this publication truly is. The pseudo professional Microsoft Publisher make-yr-own-family-newsletter style layout, the vile stoner art cover with it's melting skulls and clowns, it's like a combination of a 15-year old's puerile yet heartfelt tracing of Freddie Kreuger onto a Styx LP cover or something. (LG)

PO Box 9833 / Fall River, MA 02720

CLENCH #s 1-8 / SASE or 1 stamp each
8.5 x 11 – copied – 1 page each

Pretty cool one sheet newsletter/zine here, each issue covering a particular old school USHC band which is neat. Void, Agnostic Front, Fuck Ups, FU's, Black Flag, and more. Collects lots of different info about each band and the editor's and others experiences with the band and their music. Very cool idea! (NM)

Philip Knowles / 240 Spring Hill Drive #210 / Roselle, IL 60172-2470

CRUMMY STUFF #1 / $1 or trade
4 x 3 – copied – 16 pgs

Small size punk comic zine here telling many tales of punk rock life and silliness. Subtitled "Sketch Diary of a Drunken Weirdo"—yup! Far be it from me to disagree. (NM)

K Godsey / 2883 Harrison Ave, 2-A / Cincinnati, OH 45211

DANCE OF THE SKLELETONS #4 / $2
5.5 x 4.25 – copied – 52 pgs

In the interest of fairness, I'll start with a description of the zine. It's well written, has some nice graphics, and a decent layout. This issue contains an interview with an anarchist union organizer, a review of a union organizing campaign, and a story about a picket line. Unfortunately, the "union" politics represented here are of the vanguard, overly romantic style that makes my teeth hurt. The unionizing story is almost a play-act of organizing a union. The workers in question were students at a University employed as projectionist and their union as the IWW. Not surprisingly, once the union was elected, the enthusiasm of the workers dissipated with the main organizer leaving and the students moving away. As a former member of the IWW, I have a great respect for the history of the Wobblies with their emphasis on the class struggle, direct action, and participatory democracy, but the IWW in 2006 is a different "union" than it was 75 years ago. The organizing campaign undertaken by the author reads more like a fantasy game than a real attempt to send a blow to the bosses. Rather than work towards setting up antiquated unions, maybe we can work in solidarity with workers whose lives are in jeopardy of being destroyed by capitalism. In the author's defense, he does make an honest assessment of the failures of the campaign and a realization of the problems with the tactics employed by the IWW. The other story of setting up picket line in support of terminated cleaning employees at a mall also betrays a lack of understanding of the role of "organizers" and activists in organizing and political campaigns. These aren't simple problems and the author does offer good criticism of the work done, but overall *Dance of the Skeletons* left me feeling frustrated by the employment of flawed tactics and antiquated philosophy. (The address listed is only valid through August, after that, use email) (CR)

14-19 Happy Tree / Apt.. 205 / Nishi 16, Minami 5 / Obihiro, Hokkaido 080-0027 / Japan
emak_bakia@hotmail.com

DARKEN BEFORE STORM # 1 / $2
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 52 pgs

Written by a Swiss-Italian dude named Gian, *Darken Before Storm* is a zine covering hardcore and crust. Issue #1 features interviews with Zerstort, Hrydjuverk, Schifosi, and Born Dead Icons. There are also diatribes and reviews (in English). (AS)

Spalenring 139 / 4055 / Basel Switzerland

DORIS #23 / $1.50

8.5 x 5.5 copied – 36 pgs

Doris is a pretty straightforward, slice of life kind of zine, with (what I think is) a running alphabetical theme. This issue features articles, or pieces which begin with letters L, M, N, and O. Original writing and a minimalist style make this one worth checking out. (AS)

Microcosm Publishing / PO Box 14332 / Portland, OR 97293

JANE: DOCUMENTS FROM CHICAGO'S CLANDESTINE ABORTION SERVICE 1968-1973 / $3

5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 60 pgs

To paraphrase Kanye West, the state doesn't care about women. We can get raped and dumped out of a car and the police will never come, we are murdered while doing sex work and the case is listed as NHI (No Humans Involved), our right to make our own decisions is in a constant state of flux: can we decide if we have abortions? Do we have the right to birth control? Are we able to earn enough money to survive? There are many terrible things happening to women every day, which is why it is particularly inspiring to find a zine that presents a story of a group of women who take that power back. Jane, the code name for the group of women who worked in Chicago during the years before Roe vs. Wade, giving abortions in clean, safe, understanding spaces. This in itsself is really cool and interesting to read about, it's another example of how groups of people making concious choices to work outside of societal norms can really provide valuable services and help people out. But what I found to be the most important part of their story was that these women who preformed over 11,000 abortions during the years that Jane was active, weren't doctors. They weren't medical professionals at all. They were just people who thought that it was important to provide abortions for women who wanted them, and were willing to do the work themselves. This zine is really awesome, and it doesn't just focus on the sunshiney, romantic side of Jane. There is plenty of time spent on the problems the group had, the mistakes they made, and the time they spent in jail, giving the zine an (I assume) accurate version of the story of these women who went out of their way to help thousands of people at a time when abortions were illegal, expensive and unsafe. (TW)

Firestarter Press / PO Box 50217 / Baltimore, MD 21211

firestartedpress@ziplip.com

LAST HOURS #13 / $?

8.5 x 11 – printed – 116 pgs

I've never read this zine before, but I guess *Last Hours* just changed their format to make it glossier and fancier, for whatever reason. I was pleasantly surprised to see that it is anti–copyright, and looks like it supports a lot of DIY stuff. I really am not fond of the presentation and would never have picked this up off the shelf, but it was actually fine. Probably more appealing if you're living in England, but accessible to other people as well. There was some political stuff like an article on the Green Scare, the London Zine Symposium, No Borders action camps and a whole section devoted to DIY and punk comics (like *Tank Girl!*). I am, however, unhappy to say that one of the columns had an ODE TO CHARLES BUKOWKI. I don't know what I did to deserve having two Bukowski references, but I'm sorry for whatever it was. The rest of this zine is fine, though. (TW)

www.lasthours.org.uk

Info@rnzine.co.uk

Last Hours / PO Box 382 / 456–458 The Strand / London, WC2R 0DZ, UK

MAJOR MALFUNCTION #4 / $?

8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 24 pgs

This cut 'n' paste zine from the Philippines focuses on the international straight edge/youth crew scene. You get a report from Muenster, Germany, brief interviews with American, Italian, Filippino, and French bands of various renown, and record and zine reviews. Nothing too in depth, but a nice way to keep up with recent straight edge happenings around the world. (CS)

Walid "Led" Ma'arouf / #11 St Martin Street / Rosalia Village 2 / Tandang Sora, Quezon City / 1116 Philippines

verbal_assault01@yahoo.com

LAST HOURS
COMICS & PUNK ROCK
TANK GIRL
ALAN MARTIN DISCUSSES HIS CREATIONS
SETH TOBOCMAN & NICOLE SCHULMAN
INTERNATIONAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD & 3RD WORLD WAR ILLUSTRATED
JEFFREY BROWN
GETTING CLUMSY WITH THE UNLIKELY CREATOR
AL BURIAN OF MILEMARKER
DISCUSSING PUNK AND COMICS
AVOW FANZINE
DIY ILLUSTRATION AND PUNK ROCK INK
FRANCE IN REVOLT
REPORT BACK ON THE ANTI-CPE MOVEMENT
THIS BIKE IS A PIPEBOMB
BLOWING UP THE MYTHS ABOUT PUNK ROCK & DIY
PLUS HURRICANE KATRINA * BORN/DEAD * GOGOL BORDELLO * POGO CAFE * NO BORDERS * MATILDAS + MUCH MORE
#13
SUMMER 2006

MY BRAIN HURTS #3 / $3

5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 28 pgs

Most comic books leave me a little dissatisfied—it just seems that in five minutes, you've read it all. However, as far as comics go, this one has a good storyline going on (queer punk kids in NYC) and a decent graphic style (it also came in an elaborately decorated envelope that made me miss the days of pen pals). I'm looking forward to future issues. (MD)

287 Ocean Ave #40 / Brooklyn, NY 11225

liz@lizbaillie.com

NEGATIVE REACTION #5 / $5

8.5 x 11 – copied – 28 pgs

Good effort with this British zine—for some reason I always dig the British mags, they seem to have better reviews, good humor, and even if they cover bands I don't listen to, I tend to enjoy reading them. This issue features Dr Strange Records, Angelic Upstarts, Anti-Nowhere League, tons of reviews, and some good commentary on how the UK is becoming more fascistic under Blair (in a way, made me feel better, misery loves company). I enjoyed it! (MD)

T Howarth / 20 New Front St / Tanfield Lea, Stanley / Co. Durham / DH9 9LY England

trevhag1@hotmail.com

ZINES

NORMAL MAN #4 / $2
8 x 6 – printed – 32 pgs – Swedish

This is a pretty cool fanzine from Sweden. Mostly it is interviews, including Jeffery Brown, Pontus Lundkvist, Karl Backman and the great band Mob 47. There are also some record reviews, plus some comics in English. This fanzine is mostly for those into the Swedish scene. (HH)

Fredrik Kullman / Edovagen 24A / 132 30 Saltsjo-Boo / Sweden
normalmanfanzine@hotmail.com

NOT VERY NICE Vol 2 / #1 US $3 world
8.5 x 11 – printed – 32 pages

Nice grind/HC zine featuring entirely interviews. This issue includes: Wadge, Hellnation, Lebenden Toten, Capitalist Casualties, Agathocles, Insect Warfare, and more. Personally, I would like to see some reviews and other stuff to mix it up a little, but this is done well nonetheless. (NM)

5726 Sussex Ct / Troy, MI 48098

OLLYOLLYOXENFREE! #3 / $1
5.5 x 4.25 – copied – 28 pgs

There's that old saying that we don't stop playing because we get old, we get old because we stop playing. Our friends at *Ollyollyoxenfree!* do their best to keep the old farts reviewing zines young with this small DIY compilation of games. Included in this issue are such classics as "Pass The Moose," "Murder," and "Ghost In The Graveyard" none of which I've ever heard of nor played. It's an enjoyable read regardless if you ever put these games into action. (CR)

127 Pope St. / Louisville, KY 40206
shakes@riseup.net

OX #65 / $9
11 x 8 – printed – 148 pgs – German

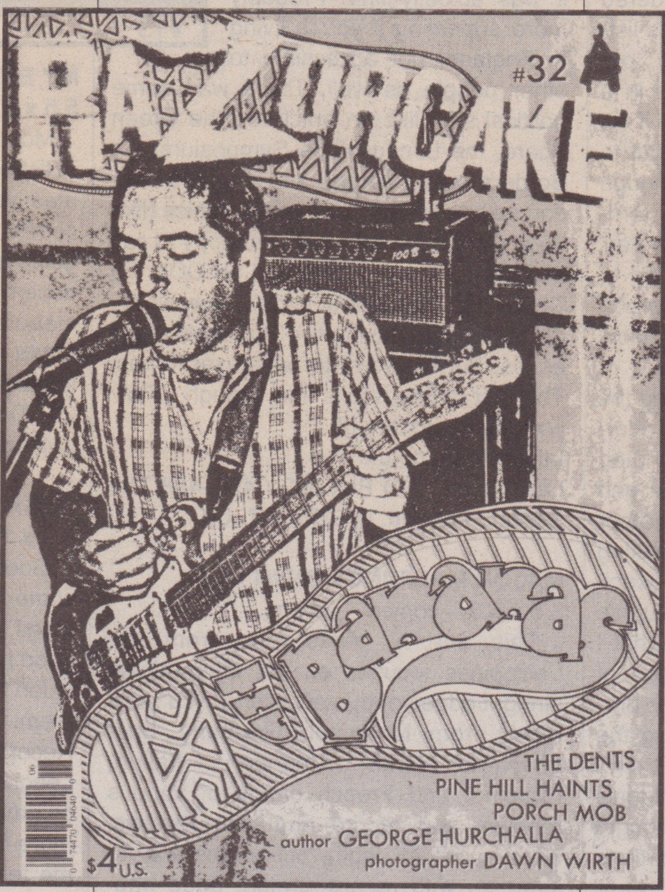
NOFX is the featured band in this latest edition of Germany's biggest fanzine. Also included are interviews with the bands the Avengers, Doll Squad, Lost Lyrics, ZSK, Anti-Flag, Drones, The EX, and plenty others. Plus there are articles on punk movies, the Munich scene and Peter Pank. Finally, to say this fanzine is loaded with hundreds of new record reviews and lots of cool ads. Oh, and of course this fanzine comes with its customary free CD sampler featuring 28 bands. *Ox* is a definitive read for the world wide punk scene. (HH)

PO Box 102225 / 42766 Haan / Germany
www.ox-fanzine.de

PAPING #14 / $25
11 x 8.5 – silk-screened – 48 pgs

$25 is too much to pay for a zine, we can all agree on that, but *Paping* is a zine only in that it has pages with drawings and writing. Each copy of this limited edition zine have a stained and burned wood cover and beautiful silk-screened comics and drawings by artists, Sara Edward-Corbett, Billy Mavreas, Sean McCarthy, Zak Smith John Mejias, Dave Miko, Shawn Cheng, and Matt Wiegle, Jeff Lewis. Reading through this zine is much more like having a really great art exhibit sitting on your shelf ready to be touched, read, and admired. If you can afford it, it's well worth it. (CR)

John / Paping / 60 St. Marks PL./ Apt, 4 / New York, NY 10003
www.paping.org



PLASTIC BOMB #55 / $7
11 x 8 – printed – 76 pgs – German

As usual this punk fanzine is loaded with lots of cool punk rock. Included in this issue are interviews with the bands Avengers, Anal Cunt, Mob 47, Razzia, and one of my all time favorite German bands Normahl. There is an interesting article on the relevance of fanzines in today's punk scene, plus an interview with Dolf of *Trust* fanzine. Also this fanzine is loaded with record reviews, lots of cool ads, a 40-page catalogue and a free 29-song CD sampler. This issue also comes with an anti-nazi DVD that includes the bands Die Totenhosen, Muff Potter, Julia Hummer, Culcha Candela and other cool stuff. (HH)

Postfach 100205 / D-47002 Duisburg / Germany
www.plastic-bomb.de

RAZORCAKE #32 / $3
8.5 x 11 – printed – 116 pgs

First off, you can subscribe in the US (if you're not in jail) for fifteen bucks a year (six issues). *Razorcake* is consistently good enough that if you've ever liked it, and you have a stable address and the cash, you should do it. For instance, this isn't their best issue—the columns are fewer and not as strong, and they're still going cheap on zine reviews (one point five pages) 'cause they put 'em on the internet instead, and use the space for fancy layout. But the photography, interviews, and some of the reviews are still pretty great. This issue features a talk with a photographer of the early L.A. scene, Dawn Wirth, showcasing her work, and the interview with George Hurchalla (by my favorite reviewer, Jimmy Alvarado) is pretty great. Some bands are included as well—Porch Mob, the Bananas, and a fucking punk-influenced country band where the singer has "done mission work," which I think means "acted as a recruiter for Christianity," though he talks about "a higher power," "the mysteries of life after death," etc. instead of owning up to what he believes. I think being a recruiter for Christianity is only a little better than turning your friends onto heroin, so fuck that guy. But yeah, I like this magazine anyway. (JM)

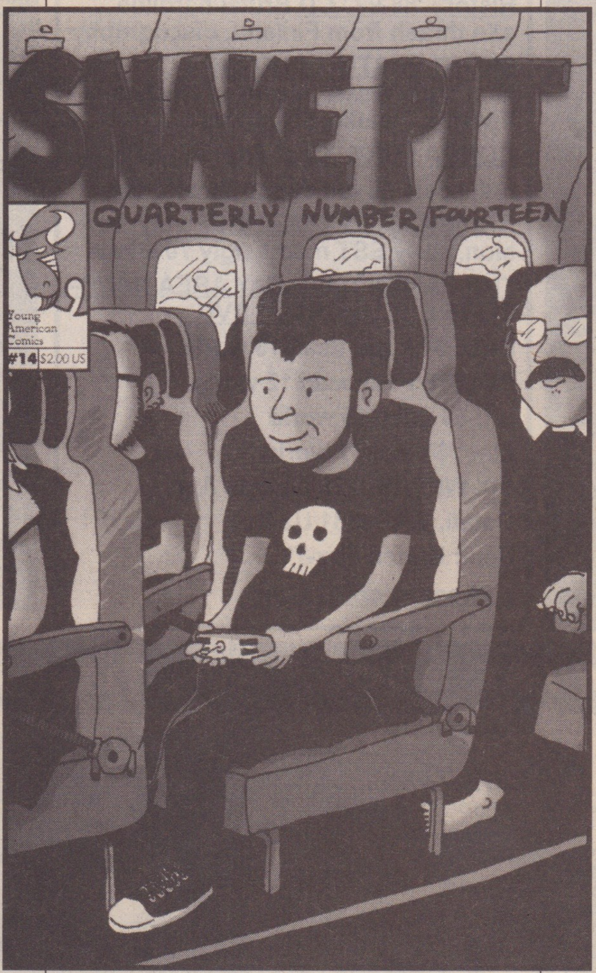
PO Box 42129 / Los Angeles, CA 90042 /
www.razorcake.org

THE SECRET FILES OF CAPTAIN SISSY #5 $3
8.5 x 5 – printed – 72 pages

Super thick secret emo summer styled zine that reads like something you would have picked up at More Than Music '96... Andy goofily and somewhat charmingly recounts his adventures over the past five years, from knocking himself out dropping in on vert with no pads to an epic anarcho bookmobile tour of the US. This isn't my favorite "genre" of zine so to speak, but I'd say it's probably one of the best of said genre I have read...Political and heartfelt, jaded and genuine. Unsurprisingly this is part of the Microcosm zine empire. (LG)
PO Box 14332 / Portland OR 97293

SNAKEPIT #14 / $2
8.5 x 5.5 – printed – 36 pgs

Look, I'm going to say something important here, and I want you all to listen. If you like reading Bukowski, getting wasted every night, being awkward around girls you like, watching movies, playing video games and being a basically dudely guy, *please*, keep it to yourself. Make a zine and hand it out to your friends who will appreciate it, but don't sell it publicly so I have to review it. Very few people care. Yeesh. That being said, the extra story in here about a high school adventure (oooh...and teenage sex. Blech) is well-narrated and interesting. Also, the comics feature Ben's dread mullet. I wouldn't recommend this to people I'm friends with, but maybe you'd like it. (TW)
Snakepit / PO Box 49447 / Austin, TX 78765
www.youngamericancomics.com



TOINEN VAIHTOEHTO #196 / trade
8 x 6 – printed – 32 pgs – Finnish

This monthly issue includes the usual punk band news in Finland, lots of record reviews and an interesting article on fanzines. There is one long interview with ASA which I assume is a band. This fanzine is definitely for those into Finnish DIY. Definitely worth checking out. (HH)
PO Box 1 / 65200 Vaasa / Finland
www.punkinfinland.net/tv/english

TRUST #117 / $5
11 x 8 – printed – 68 pgs – German

Wow! Punk rock is aging, but at least it still has an edge—at least parts of it. And this fanzine is that part. Yes, *Trust* fanzine turned twenty today as I write this review. This fanzine and *MRR* have always had a special bond. It is truly great knowing that such fanzines as these exist offering an alternative to all the other bullshit in the music industry. *Trust* rocks! Included in this issue are band interviews with Propagandhi, Pansy Division, GLW/DRK, Crime Desire, and Ectogram. There are also record reviews, columns and ads. Definitely, check this fanzine out, or at least visit the website. Punk rock is not dead. *Trust* proves it! (HH)
www.trust-zine.de

UGZ #16 / $4.50
8 x 11 – printed – 72 pages

Always excited to see the new issue of *Urban Guerrilla Zine*. An excellent mix of East Bay goings-on as well as national and some international punk/HC. This issue is lookin' very slick with its glossy cover! This issue has Kylesa, Amebix (!), Words that Burn, Deathtoll, Sunday Morning Einsteins, Stormcrow, Tomorrow, plus stuff on B.O.B. fest, reviews, pictures, etc. Great! (NM)
PMB 419 / 1442A Walnut St. / Berkeley, CA 94709

THE WARRIOR WIND #2 / free
6.5 x 8 – copied – 8 pgs

This newsletter is devoted to struggles earth and animal liberation activists, or those painted as "eco-terrorists," are having with the government and legal system. The lead story details some Sacramento-area people awaiting trial, and is a great look at the state's various tactics. In this case, these include use of an undercover operative, who is pictured herein. Supposedly, in two years she made $75K! Other cases profiled include Peter Young, Rod Coronado, and people working against Huntingdon Life Sciences. I think most of this stuff came off the internet, but if you're not tuned in to this material there, this is an excellent source. (JM)
c/o Liberation Projects / 838 E. High St. #115 / Lexington, KY 40502

THE YELLOW RAKE #4 Volume 2 / $1?
8.25 x 11 – newsprint – 28 pgs

Less of a zine than a weekly-type periodical, *The Yellow Rake* contains articles about protest against Bush, an interview with Denver-based comedian Ben Kronberg, appropriation of British slang, and an interview with Anti-Flag. A decent read whose strength lies in its focus on local music and politics. (CR)
The Yellow Rake / c/o Brian Polk / PO Box 181024 / Denver, CO 80218
brian@theyellowrake.com

YOUTH CULTURE KILLED MY DOG #6 / $2 or trade
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 60 pgs

Pretty much your run of the mill zine that could have been made in 1986, 1996, or 2006. Crimethinc stuff, DIY booking info, a "Christmas Expose" that was not so good, and some other stuff. Nothing new here, but nothing totally awful. Cut 'n' paste style teenage stuff. (TW)
YCKMD/ 310 W. 2nd St. / Anderson, IN 46016
youthculturekilledmydog.tripod.com

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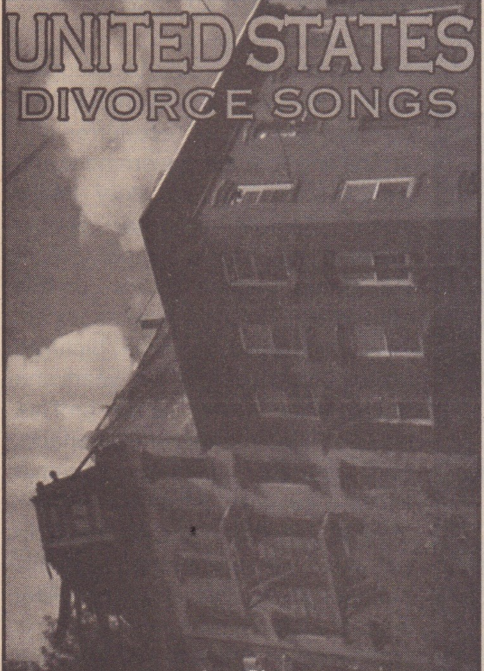

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Cotati, CA 94931 USA
Next: Rotten Fux-7"
sixweeksrecords.com

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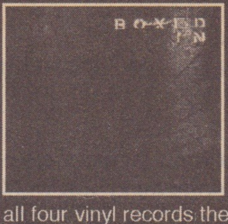
out fucking now out fucking now out fucking now



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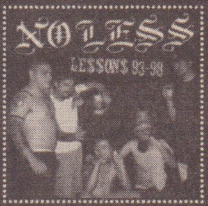

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REVOLUTION BY THE BOOK: NEW TITLES FROM AK PRESS!

CLANDESTINES

The Pirate Journals of an Irish Exile
by Ramor Ryan

An epic debut from anarchist world-traveller Ramor Ryan! These non-fiction tales read like Che's *Motorcycle Diaries* . . . if they'd been written by Hunter S. Thompson. As much an adventure story as an unofficial chronicle of modern resistance movements, *Clandestines* spirits the reader across the globe. From Zapatista villages to Kurdish guerrilla camps, from Berlin squats to mutiny on the high seas and, at each stop along the way, we see a world in constant flux, struggling to be reborn. Perfect summer reading!

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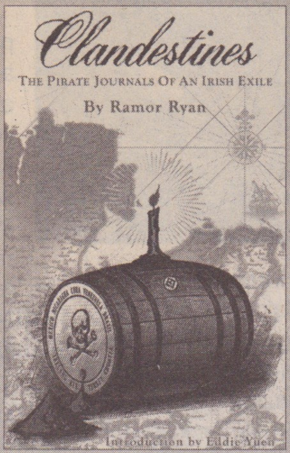
Clandestines
The Pirate Journals Of An Irish Exile
By Ramor Ryan
Introduction by Eddie Yuen

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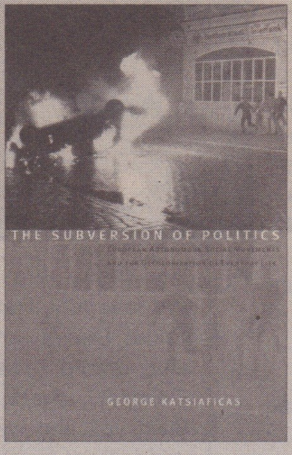
—Mick McCaughan, *Battle of Venezuela*



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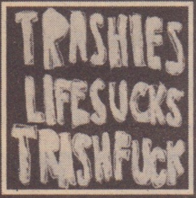

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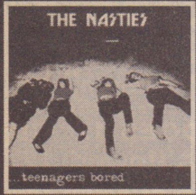

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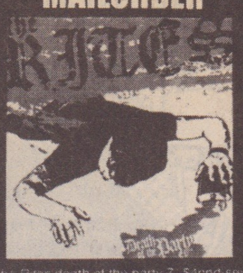

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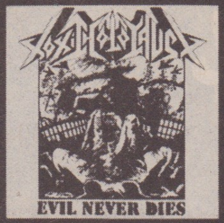

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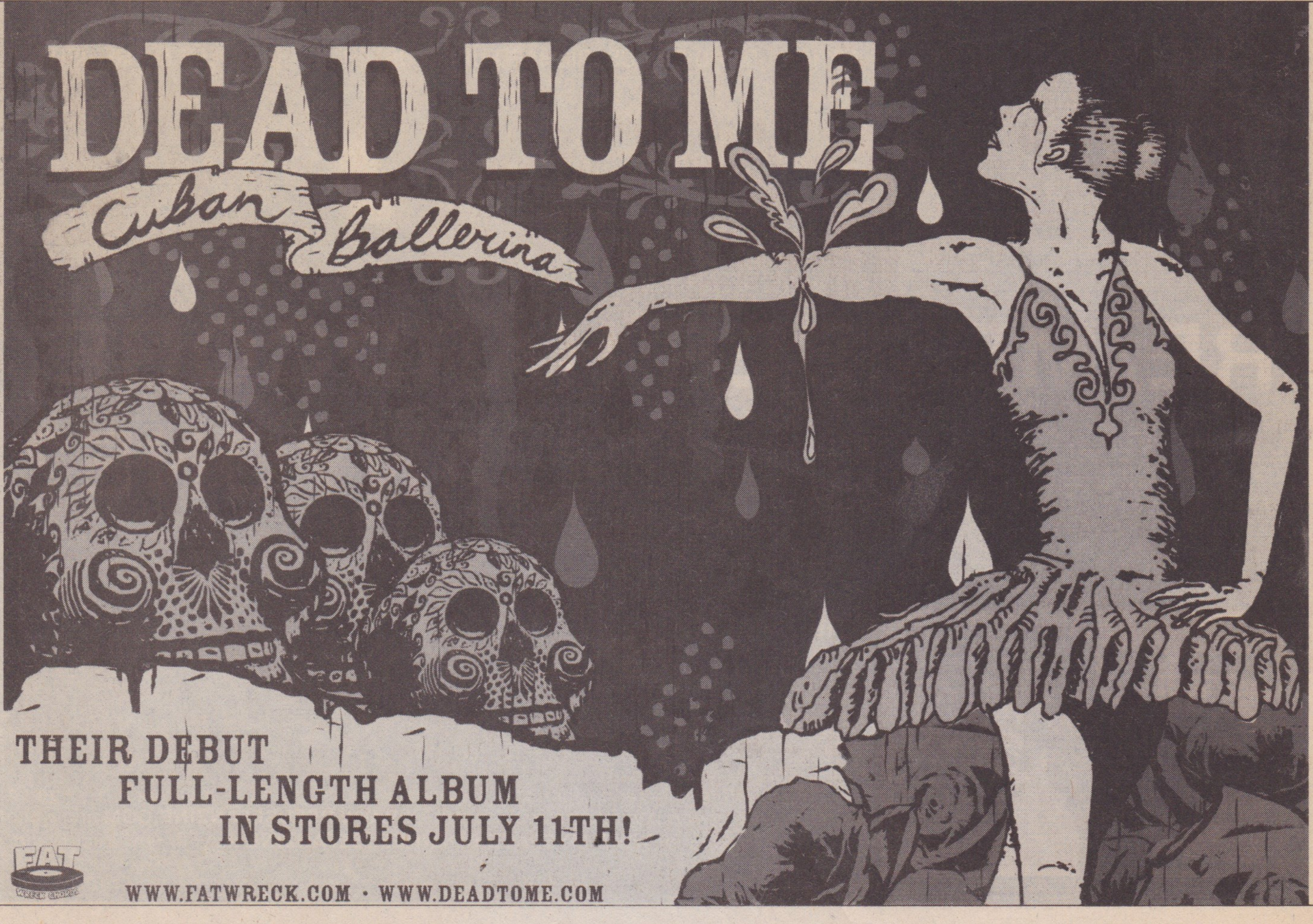

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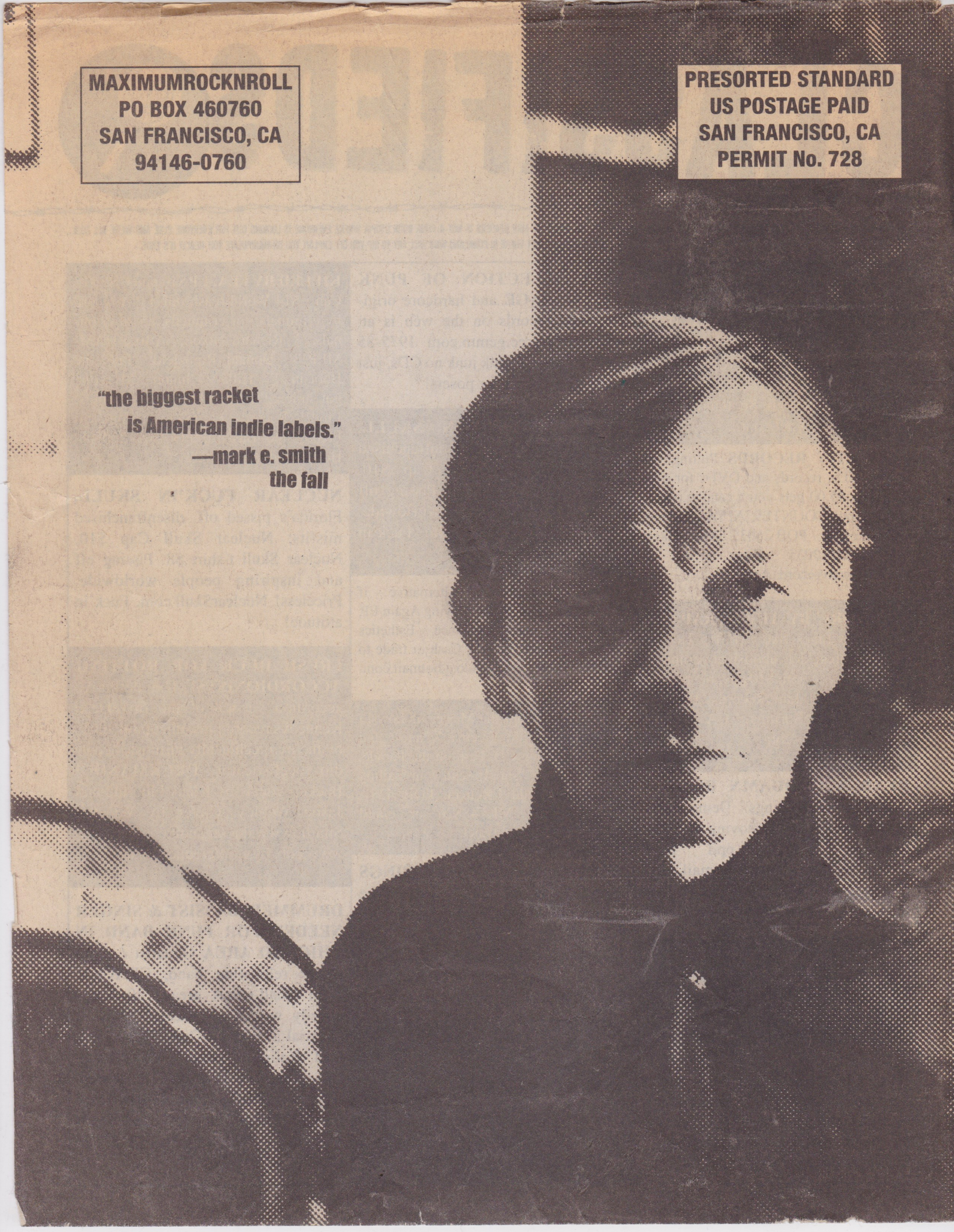

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